9042 H1

HISTORY

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

By EDWARD GIBBON, Efq;

VOLUME THE FIRST.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W. STRAHAN; AND T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

M DCC LXXXIII.

and the same

Period State State

A MONTH OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR

Constitution of the consti

and the Market of the

Apple Augusta Dogus

PREFACE.

the Time sink of their methods may be traced

E P A C E

niter es actional ly ampaca-base alleger

It is not my intention to detain the reader by expatiating on the variety, or the importance of the subject, which I have undertaken to treat; since the merit of the choice would serve to render the weakness of the execution still more apparent, and still less excusable. But as I have presumed to lay before the Public a sirst volume only of the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, it will perhaps be expected that I should explain, in a few words, the nature and limits of my general plan.

The memorable series of revolutions, which, in the course of about thirteen centuries, gradually undermined, and at length destroyed, the solid fabric of Roman greatness, may, with some propriety, be divided into the three sollowing periods.

I. The

The first volume of the quarto, is now contained in the two first volumes of this octavo, edition.

I. The first of these periods may be traced from the age of Trajan and the Antonines, when the Roman monarchy, having attained its full strength and maturity, began to verge towards its decline; and will extend to the subversion of the Western Empire, by the barbarians of Germany and Scythia, the rude ancestors of the most polished nations of modern Europe. This extraordinary revolution, which subjected Rome to the power of a Gothic conqueror, was completed about the beginning of the sixth century.

II. The second period of the Decline and Fall of Rome, may be supposed to commence with the reign of Justinian, who by his laws, as well as by his victories, restored a transient splendour to the Eastern Empire. It will comprehend the invasion of Italy by the Lombards; the conquest of the Asiatic and African provinces by the Arabs, who embraced the religion of Mahomet; the revolt of the Roman people against the feeble princes of Constantinople; and the elevation of Charlemagne, who, in the year eight hundred, established the second, or German Empire of the west.

III. The last and longest of these periods includes about six centuries and a half; from the



V

the revival of the Western Empire, till the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, and the extinction of a degenerate race of princes, who continued to assume the titles of Casar and Augustus, after their dominions were contracted to the limits of a fingle city; in which the language, as well as manners, of the ancient Romans, had been long fince forgotten. The writer who should undertake to relate the events of this period, would find himself obliged to enter into the general history of the Crusades, as far as they contributed to the ruin of the Greek Empire; and he would fcarcely be able to reftrain his curiofity from making fome inquiry into the flate of the city of Rome, during the darkness and confusion of the middle ages.

As I have ventured, perhaps too hastily, to commit to the press, a work, which, in every sense of the word, deserves the epithet of imperfect, I consider myself as contracting an engagement to finish, most probably in a second volume 2, the first of these memorable periods; and to deliver to the Public, the complete history of the Decline and Fall of

Entrattator >

Rome,

The Author, as it frequently happens, took an inadequate measure of his growing work. The remainder of the first period has silled two volumes in quarto, the four last volumes of this octavo edition.

Rome, from the age of the Antonines, to the fubversion of the Western Empire. With regard to the subsequent periods, though I may entertain some hopes, I dare not presume to give any assurances. The execution of the extensive plan which I have described, would connect the ancient and modern history of the World; but it would require many years of health, of leisure, and of perseverance.

February 1, 1776.

P. S. The entire History, which is now published, of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire in the West, abundantly discharges my engagements with the Public. Perhaps their favourable opinion may encourage me to prosecute a work, which, however laborious it may seem, is the most agreeable occupation of my leisure hours.

which is the Cramari, as he had no vicinity

alartics of erds of vibracial blury on bace

tributed so the rues of the Carell

Bentinck-Street,
March 1, 1781.

An Author easily persuades himself that the public opinion is still favourable to his labours; and

The Ackness as it frequently hoppens, cook at inthe-

complete history of the Destine and Walles

and I have now embraced the ferious refolution of proceeding to the last period of my original defign, and of the Roman Empire, the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, in the year one thousand four hundred and fifty-three. The most patient Reader, who computes that three ponderous volumes 3 have been already employed on the events of four centuries, may, perhaps, be alarmed at the long prospect of nine hundred years. But it is not my intention to expatiate with the fame minuteness on the whole series of the Byzantine history. At our entrance into this period, the reign of Justinian, and the conquests of the Mahometans, will deferve and detain our attention, and the last age of Constantinople (the Crusades and the Turks) is connected with the revolutions of Modern Europe. From the feventh to the eleventh century, the obscure interval will be supplied by a concise narrative of fuch facts, as may still appear either interesting or important.

BENTINCK-STREET, March 1, 1782.

. first

The fix volumes of this octavo edition.

apply the first stope of the left point of my original detign, and of the Roman Empire, the taking of Confidentinople by the Tarks.

Roman Empire is now delivered to the Public in a more convenient form. Some alterations and improvements had prefented them selves to my mind, but I was unwilling to injure or offend the purchasers of the preceding editions. The accuracy of the Corrector of the press has been already tried and approved: and, perhaps, I may stand excused; if, amidst the avocations of a busy winter, I have preferred the pleasures of composition and study, to the minute diligence of revising a former publication.

with the revolutions of Mode, radare south the describe of the cleventh costs of the cle

Deminion-Office :

The fir bolumes of his boars edicion

ADVERTISEMENT.

ADVERTIBUTE

of the MSS. Find to many displaces have action commonly the fermion of the fermio

DILIGENCE and accuracy are the only merits which an historical writer may ascribe to himself; if any merit indeed can be assumed from the performance of an indispensable duty. I may therefore be allowed to say, that I have carefully examined all the original materials that could illustrate the subject which I had undertaken to treat. Should I ever complete the extensive design which has been sketched out in the Presace, I might perhaps conclude it with a critical account of the authors consulted during the progress of the whole work; and however such an attempt might incur the censure of ostentation, I am persuaded, that it would be susceptible of entertainment as well as information.

At present I shall content myself with a single observation. The Biographers, who, under the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine, composed, or rather compiled, the lives of the Emperors, from Hadrian to the sons of Carus, are usually mentioned under the names of Ælius Spartianus, Julius Capitolinus, Ælius Lampridius, Vulcatius Gallicanus, Trebellius Pollio, and Flavius Vopiscus. But there is so much perplexity in the titles Vol. I.

of the MSS.; and so many disputes have arisen among the critics (see Fabricius, Biblioth. Latin. l. iii. c. 6.) concerning their number, their names, and their respective property, that for the most part I have quoted them without distinction, under the general and well-known title of the Augustan History.

The coupling the second second

And the first and a secretary and the

and the best to be the best of the form of the party of the

The collection of the whole the collection of th

Rest to Many Thomas and the Finders and

obligation from thing admin, and conferred

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ETHETHOO.

OFTHE

FIRST VOLUME.

CHAP. I.

The Extent and military Force of the Empire, in the Age of the Antonines.

, D.	P	age
TNTRODUCTION		1
A Moderation of Augustus		2
Imitated by his Successors	•	4
Conquest of Britain was the first I	exception to it	5
Conquest of Dacia, the second En		8
Conquests of Trajan in the East	0	9
Refigned by his Successor Adrian	Principles of Go	10
Contrast of Hadrian and Antoning	ASSESSED TO THE PARTY OF	12
Pacific System of Hadrian and the t		ь.
Defensive Wars of Marcus Antoni	and the same of the same	13
Military Establishment of the Rom	Of the March - core	14
Discipline	none province of all all a second	5
Exercises	A SPACE OF THE STATE OF THE STA	7
The Legions under the Emperors	Mary Control of the Control of the Mary Control	9
Arms		9
Cavalry	DANSON TO BE STATE OF THE STATE	2
Auxiliaries -		3
Artillery	The second secon	4
Encampment	At the second state of the second	5
March		6
Number and Disposition of the Leg		7
Navy	the State of the control of the control of the control of	8
Amount of the whole Establishmen	The second on the last	0
A Company of the Comp	Vie	

A. D.	Page
View of the Provinces of the Roman Empire -	ib.
Spain	ib.
Gaul -	31
Britain - apri- 10 -	33
Italy ,	ib.
The Danube and Illyrian Frontier -	35
Rhatia M U -LO V- TO SIII	ib.
Noricum and Pannonia	36
Dalmatia	ib.
Mæsia and Dacia	37
Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece -	ib.
Afia Minor	38
Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine	- 39
Egypt -	40
Entent of in there Force of its theme in the last	41
The Mediterranean, with its Islands -	42
General Idea of the Roman Empire	43
THIRD DUCTION OF THE PARTY OF	
CHAPAIL DOGGOOM	
Initiated by hig Succession - 1.1 - excession	
Of the Union and internal Prosperity of the Roman En	pire
in the Age of the Antonines.	
Conquells of Trains in the flatt	Page
Principles of Government Proposition of the Common of the	45
Universal Spirit of Toleration	46 ib.
it Of the People out add branginhall to me T. a ghing	
Of Philosophers and A with to saw avidence	48
Of the Magistrates of any to medicillant I wishlink	50
In the Provinces	51
At Rome 1 - 1 Airrox I	52
Freedom of Rome waraquid and rahar annigal and	53
an Italy	55
The Provinces	56
Colonies, and Municipal Towns	57
Division of the Latin and the Greek Provinces	60
General Use of both the Greek and Latin Languages	
	63
Their Treatment	ib.
的是一种,我们就是一种的人,我们就是一个人的人,我们就是一个人的人,我们就是一个人的人,我们就没有一个人的人,我们就会不是一个人的人,这个人的人,我们就会没有一	65
Numbers to angentidately to describe to the contract	66
i i	pu-

A. D.	Page
Populousness of the Roman Empire	
Obedience and Union	1 69
Roman Monuments	70
Zvillin) or missing street, and provide marketing	ib.
Example of Herodes Atticus	
His Reputation	74
Most of the Roman Monuments for public Use	
Temples, Theatres, Aqueducts	ib.
Number and Greatness of the Cities of the E	
In Italy	ib.
Gaul and Spain -	78
Africa	79
Afia	ib.
Roman Roads	18 (197
	- Jan 3 82
Navigation	spirited 83
Improvement of Agriculture in the Western	
tries of the Empire	
Introduction of Fruits, &c.	
The Vine Wine - stand but - as	
The Olive and -trans-damaged 1	
Flax	
Artificial Grass	
General Plenty	-100 ib.
Arts of Luxury	87
Foreign Trade	- 88
Gold and Silver and -	89
General Felicity	- 90:
Decline of Courage	91
of Genius	921
Degeneracy	94
the property of the second to the second	min/2-man = 1
CHAP, III.	oddie er en st
The second of the Art	Part of the State
Of the Constitution of the Roman Empire, in the	Age of the
Antonines.	AND THE RESERVE OF
A.D. Lighten - Lighten O english wills	Page
Idea of a Monarchy	95
Situation of Augustus	ib.
He reforms the Senate	- 97
TAMO	Refigns

As DQ		Page
Refigns his usurped Power	Carren en a L	ib.
Is prevailed upon to sesume it under t	he Title of	
Emperor, or General -		98
Power of the Roman Generals	的地位的代码。	99
Lieutenants of the Emperor	3 - Woman 3	101
Division of the Provinces between the I		
the Senate		102
The former preserves his military Con	mand, and	
Guards, in Rome itself	the calendary	103
Consular and Tribunitian Powers	- clast at	ib.
Imperial Prerogatives	general made	106
The Magistrates	and supplied the	ib.
The Senate	- 1 sales	Control of the Control
General Idea of the Imperial System	arta annually	109
Court of the Emperors	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Deification		11
	as the course of b	\$500000mm601
Character and Policy of Augustus		14
Image of Liberty for the People	144 Park 4 16 1	2012060
Attempts of the Senate after the Death		
Image of Government for the Armies		
Their Obedience		17
Delignation of a Successor	STATE OF THE PARTY	18
Of Tiberius		19
Of Titus		ib.
The Race of the Cæfars, and Flavian		ib.
96 Adoption and character of Trajan		20
117 Of Hadrian		21
Adoption of the Elder and younger Ver		
138—180. Adoption of the two Antonines		23
	vasacion i	
of Marcus		25
Happiness of the Romans		26
Its precarious Nature		27
Memory of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, an	d Domitian 1	28
Peculiar Misery of the Romans under the		
Infentibility of the Orientale -		ib.
Knowledge and free Spirit of the Ron		30
Extent of their Empire left them no Place	e of Refuge 1	32

CHAP. IV.

The Cruelty, Follies, and Murder of Commodus.—Election of Pervinax.—His Attempts to reform the State.—His Affassination by the Pratorian Guards.

A. D.	Page
Indulgence of Marcus	135
To his Wife Faustinz	ib.
To his Son Commodus	137
180 Accession of the Emperor Commodus -	ib.
Character of Commodus	138
His Return to Rome	139
183 Is wounded by an Affaffin	140
Hatred and Cruelty of Commodus towards the Senat	e 141
The Quintilian Brothers	142
186 The Minister Perennis	143
Revolt of Maternus	144
The Minister Cleander	145
His Avarice and Cruelty	146
189 Sedition and Death of Cleander	147
Dissolute Pleasures of Commodus	149
His Ignorance and low Sports	150
Hunting of wild Beafts	151
Commodus displays his Skill in the Amphitheatre	152
Acts as a Gladiator	153
His Infamy and Extravagance -	154
Conspiracy of his Domestics	156
192 Death of Commodus -	ib.
Choice of Pertinax for Emperor	157
He is acknowledged by the Prætorian Guards	158
193 And by the Senate	159
The Memory of Commodus declared infamous	ib.
Legal Jurisdiction of the Senate over the Emperors	
Virtues of Pertinax	161
He endeavours to reform the State	16z
His Regulations -	ib.
His Popularity	164
Discontent of the Prætorians	ib.
A Conspiracy prevented	165
193 Murder of Pertinax by the Prætorians -	ib.
	A D

CHAP. V.

Public Sale of the Empire to Didius Julianus by the Pratorian Guards.—Clodius Albinus in Britain, Pescennius Niger in Syria, and Septimius Severus in Pannonia, declare against the Murderers of Pertinax.—Civil Wars and Victory of Severus over his three Rivals.—Relaxation of Discipline.—New Maxims of Government.

A. I	of the state of th	Page
	Proportion of the military Force to the Number of	the
	People	167
		168
	Their Camp, Strength, and Confidence	169
	Their specious Claims	170
	They offer the Empire to Sale	171
193	It is purchased by Julian	172
	Julian is acknowledged by the Senate	173
	Takes Possession of the Palace	174
	The public Discontent	ib.
	The Armies of Britain, Syria, and Pannonia, de-	
*	clare against Julian	175
4	Clodius Albinus in Britain	176
1	Pescennius Niger in Syria	178
527	Pannonia and Dalmatia	180
193	Septimius Severus	ib.
		181
		182
	Advances towards Rome	ib.
199	Distress of Julian	183
1		184
100	Is deferted by the Prætorians	ib.
	Is condemned and executed by Order of the Senate	185
038		186
13	Funeral and Apotheofis of Pertinax	187
193-	-197. Success of Severus against Niger and against	
		ib.
	Conduct of the two civil Wars	188
		189
10;	Towards Niger	ib.
.61	Towards Albinus	190
Y and	Fu	ent

A. D.	Page
Event of the civil Wars	
Decided by one or two Battles -	192
Siege of Byzantium and 1 - 40 hours of the	
Deaths of Niger and Albinus	195
Cruel Consequences of the civil Wars	ib.
Animofity of Severus against the Senate	1196
The Wisdom and Justice of his Government	197
General Peace and Prosperity	198
Relaxation of military Discipline	ib.
New Establishment of the Prætorian Guards	1199
The Office of Prætorian Præfect	200
The Senate oppressed by military Despotism	201
New Maxims of the Imperial Prerogative	202
real to the standard to the standard to the standard to	114
CHAP. VI.	17.1
The Death of Comment Tomanin of Conseelle III	
The Death of Severus.—Tyranny of Caracalla.—Ufun	
of Macrinus Follies of Elagabalus Virtues of	CONTRACTOR OF THE CONTRACTOR
ander Severus Licentiousness of the Army-General	l State
of the Roman Finances.	
A.D.	Page
Greatness and Discontent of Severus	204
His Wife the Empress Julia	ib.
Their two Sons, Caracalla and Geta -	206
Their mutual Aversion to each other	ib.
Three Emperors	207
208 The Caledonian War	ib.
Fingal and his Heroes	208
Contrast of the Caledonians and the Romans	209
Ambition of Caracalla	210
211 Death of Severus, and Accession of his two Sons	ib.
Jealoufy and Hatred of the two Emperors -	211
Fruitles Negociation for dividing the Empire be	
tween them	
212 Murder of Geta	214
Remorfe and Cruelty of Caracalla	PACHETY NETZEED CONTYNIA D
Death of Papinian	
213 His Tyranny extended over the whole Empire	218
Relaxation of Discipline	220
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	lurder

78899911 1122 113344...

	.0402F00000000000
A.D.	Pag
217 Murder of Caracalla	221
Imitation of Alexander	223
Election and character of Macrinus	ib.
Discontent of the Senate	224
of the Army	226
Macrinus attempts a Reformation of the Army	227
Death of the Empress Julia -	228
Education, Pretentions, and Revolt of Elagabalus	,
called at first Bassianus and Antoninus	ib.
\$18 Defeat and Death of Macrinus	230
Elagabalus writes to the Senate	232
219 Picture of Elagabalus	233
His Superstition	ib.
His profligate and effeminate Luxury -	235
Contempt of Decency, which distinguished th	е .
Roman Tyrants	237
Discontents of the Army	238
221 Alexander Severus declared Cæfar	ib.
see Sedition of the Guards, and Murder of Elagabalu	239
Accession of Alexander Severus	240
Power of his Mother Mamza -	241
His wife and moderate Administration -	243
Education and virtuous Temper of Alexander	- 244
Journal of his ordinary Life	ib.
222-235. General Happiness of the Roman World	246
Alexander refuses the Name of Antoninus -	247
He attempts to reform the Army	ib:
Seditions of the Prætorian Guards, and Murder o	f:
Ulpian	249
Danger of Dion Cassius	250
Tumults of the Legions -	251
Firmness of the Emperor	ib.
Defects of his Reign and Character	
Digression on the Finances of the Empire -	254
Establishment of the Tribute on Roman Citizens	255
Abolition of the Tribute	256
	257
Of Afia, Egypt, and Gaul	ib.
Of Africa and Spain	258
Of the Isle of Gyarus -	259
An An	ount

A.D.	Pig
Amount of the Revenue	259
Taxes on Roman Citizens instituted by Augustus	260
I. The Customs	261
II. The Excise	262
III. Tax on Legacies and Inheritances	263
Suited to the Laws and Manners -	-264
Regulations of the Emperors	265
Edict of Caracalla	266
The Freedom of the City given to all the Provin-	
cials, for the Purpose of Taxation -	267
Temporary Reduction of the Tribute -	íb.
Consequences of the Universal Freedom of Rome	268
CHAP. VII.	
The Elevation and Tyranny of Maximin.—Rebellio	:
Africa and Italy, under the Authority of the Sena	
Civil Wars and Seditions Violent Deaths of Mas	
and his Son, of Maximus and Balbinus, and of the	three
Gordians-Usurpation and secular Games of Philip.	
A. D.	Page
The apparent Ridicule and folid Advantages of	AND THE STREET, STREET, ST.
hereditary Succession	270
Want of it in the Roman Empire productive of	
the greatest Calamities	271
Birth and Fortunes of Maximin -	272
His military Service and Honours	274
235 Conspiracy of Maximin	275
Murder of Alexander Severus	276
Tyranny of Maximin	277
Oppression of the Provinces -	280
237 Revolt in Africa	281
Character and Elevation of the two Gordians	282
They folicit the Confirmation of their Authority	285
The Senate ratifies their Election of the Gordians	286
Declares Maximin a public Enemy	287
	ib.
Prepares for a civil War	288

237 Defeat

A.D.	Page
237 Defeat and Death of the two Gordians -	289
Election of Maximus and Balbinus by the Sen	ate 290
Their Characters	292
Tumult at Rome -	293
The Younger Gordian is declared Cæfar	- ib.
Maximin prepares to attack the Senate, and	their
Emperors -	294
238 Marches into Italy	296
Siege of Aquileia	· ib,
Conduct of Maximus	298
238 Murder of Maximin and his Son	299
His Portrait	300
Joy of the Roman World	ib.
Sedition at Rome	302
Discontent of the Prætorian Guards -	303
238 Massacre of Maximus and Balbinus -	304
The third Gordian remains fole Emperor	306
Innocence and Virtues of Gordian	ib.
240 Administration of Missitheus	307
242 The Persian War	308
243 The Arts of Philip	309
244 Murder of Gordian	ib.
Form of a military Republic	ib.
Reign of Philip -	311
248 Secular Games -	312
Decline of the Roman Empire	313
O D	
CHAP. VIII.	
Of the State of Danta accome the Defending of the	M
Of the State of Persia after the Restoration of the I	vionarchy
A. D.	and the same
The Barbarians of the East and of the North	
Revolutions of Afia	315
The Persian Monarchy restored by Artaxerxes	
Reformation of the Magian Religion	
Perfian Theology, two Principles	
	322
	remonies
	TEIMOHICS

\$8 co

A.D.	Page
Ceremonies and moral Precepts	323
Encouragement of Agriculture	324
Power of the Magi	325
Spirit of Persecution -	328
Establishment of the royal Authority in the Pro)-
vinces - the the the -	329
Extent and Population of Persia	330
Recapitulation of the War between the Parthia	n .
and Roman Empires	331
165 Cities of Seleucia and Ctefiphon -	332
216 Conquest of Osrhoene by the Romans -	. 334
230 Artaxerxes claims the Provinces of Asia, and de	
clares War against the Romans	CONTRACTOR AND CONTRACTOR
233 Pretended Victory of Alexander Severus	TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE PARTY O
More probable Account of the War	Carlotte Charles Charles Charles
240 Character and Maxims of Artaxerxes	THE PROPERTY AND PARTY AND PARTY.
Military Power of the Persians On the to - old men	
Their Infantry contemptible	ib.
Their Cavalry excellent	ib.
C H A P. IX. The State of Germany till the Invasion of the Barbaria the Time of the Emperor Decius.	ins, in
A. D. When sample shows a wind of the state of the	. A B.
Extent of Germany	Page
Climate	345 346
Its Effects on the Natives	348
Origin of the Germans -	*
Fables and Conjectures	349
The Germans ignorant of Letters	350
of Arts and Agriculture	353
of the TIG of Matala	355
Their Indolence -	356
Their Tafte for ftrong Liquors	358
State of Population -	359
German Freedom	361
Affemblies of the People -	362
Authority of the Princes and Magistrates	364
	More

by

ies

A, D.	Page
More absolute over the Property, than	
Persons of the Germans -	365
Voluntary Engagements	
German Chastity	10 tall 2 367
Its probable Causes	368
Religion	370
Its Effects in Peace	in and 372
in Warmend and will to noted	
The Bards	
Canfes which checked the Progress of t	he Ger-
mans - commend & be with some the to .	- 375
Want of Arms to come and the state of	
of Discipline	376
Civil Diffentions of Germany	378
Fomented by the Policy of Rome	
Transient Union against Marcus Antoninus	380
Distinction of the German Tribe	
Numbers	- 383
all the second second to the second and a	I don'T
CHAP. X.	
ALATHO	
The Emperors Decius, Gallus, Emilianus, I	alerian, and
Gallienus The general Irruption of the B.	
The thirty Tyrants.	100
	AgA
D. Carrier Committee Commi	Page
248-268. The Nature of the Subject	- 384
The Emperor Philip	- ib.
49 Services, Revolt, Victory, and Reign of t	he Em-
peror Decius -	385
GO He marches against the Goths -	387
Origin of the Goths from Scandinavia	- ib.
Religion of the Goths	389
Inflitutions and Death of Odin -	390
Agreeable, but uncertain, Hypothesis con	
Odin "	ib.
Emigration of the Goths from Scandinay	ia into
Pruffia	391
from Prussia to the Ukraine	- 393
The state of the s	The

and

Page ib.

ib.

ib.

The

A.D.	Page
The Gothic Nation increases in its March -	394
Distinction of the Germans and Sarmatians -	395
Description of the Ukraine	396
The Goths invade the Roman Provinces	397
250 Various Events of the Gothic War -	398
251 Decius revives the Office of Cenfor in the Perfo	on 400
The Defign impracticable, and without Effect	402
Defeat and Death of Decius and his Son -	403
251 Election of Gallus -	405
252 Retreat of the Goths	406
Gallus purchases Peace by the Payment of an annu	
Tribute	ib.
Popular Discontent	407
253 Victory and Revolt of Emilianus	408
Gallus abandoned and flain	409
Valerian revenges the Death of Gallus, and is a	
knowledged Emperor	ib.
Character of Valerian	410
253—268 General Misfortunes of the Reigns of Vale	411
Inroads of the Barbarians	412
Origin and Confederacy of the Franks -	ib.
They invade Gaul	414
They ravage Spain, and pass over into Africa	415
Origin and Renown of the Suevi -	416
A mixed Body of Suevi assume the Name of Ale	
manni	417
Invade Gaul and Italy	418
Are repulsed from Rome by the Senate and Peopl	
The Senators excluded by Gallienus from the mi	
litary Service	419
Gallienus contracts an Alliance with the Alemann	
Inroads of the Goths -	420
Conquest of the Bosphorus by the Goths .	421
The Goths acquire a naval Force	423
First naval Expedition of the Cothe	424
The Goths besiege and take Trebizond	ib.
The fecond Expedition of the Goths -	426
They plunder the Cities of Bithynia -	ib.
	etreat

A. D.	Page
Retreat of the Goths	427
Third naval Expedition of the Goths	428
They pass the Bosphorus and the Hollespont	1429
Ravage Greece, and threaten Italy	430
Their Divisions and Retreat	431
Ruin of the Temple of Ephesus	432
Conduct of the Goths at Athens	434
Conquest of Armenia by the Persians	1435
Valerian marches into the East	436
260 Is defeated and taken Prisoner by Sapor King o	
Perfia	ib.
Sapor overruns Syria, Cilicia, and Cappadocia	438
Boldness and Success of Odenathus against Sapor	440
Treatment of Valerian	441
Character and Administration of Gallienus	442
The Thirty Tyrants	444
Their real Number was no more than nineteen	445
Character and Merit of the Tyrants	ib
Their obscure Birth -	446
The Causes of their Rebellion -	447
Their violent Deaths	448
Fatal Confequences of these Usurpations -	1449
Diforders of Sicily	451
Tumults of Alexandria	452
Rebellion of the Isaurians	454
Famine and Pestilence	455
Diminution of the human Species -	ib.

Are a pulled from Rome by the Somer and People

The Countries excluded by Gulliquis fields escrept

Collicans contacts to Aller of with the Alemani

Consuelled the Boldgores by the Goths

First naval Exponsion of the Coths The Cross beloge and take Trebinond

The Costs at principlaval l'orce

418

011

. 01

OTA

154

125

121

H T feccal Exposition of the Cother

visit bus land share!

Stary Gerrice

Tiroth of the Goths

1

P

no

Po

du T

the

of

rev

fels

€m

me

THE DECLINE AND PARE

nothing the public and middle tion

HISTORY enagiers, to defer the the protection condition

of chair straine; and wiredonly, from the down

DECLINE AND FALL

revolution which will sure he forembeted, and is fall felt by the nations of the earth.

ROMANEMPIRE.

ferving those domp on which and been acquired by the policy of the length, the active emuly-

The Extent and Military Force of the Empire in the bolld grow as Age of the Antonines T , slove all

N the fecond century of the Christian Æra, CHAP. the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized Introducportion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle, but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: The Roman senate appeared to posfels the fovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. During a happy period of more than A. D. 98, VOL. I.

CHAP. fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines. It is the defign of this, and of the two fucceeding chapters, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antoninus, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.

to

th

01

de

T

wi

wh

on

we

nal

and

who

The

ploits

Craffi

C. 32.

have 1

mans bia Fe

bian g

ney of

would

Modera-Augustus.

The principal conquests of the Romans were atchieved under the republic; and the emperors, for the most part, were fatisfied with preferving those dominions which had been acquired by the policy of the senate, the active emulation of the confuls, and the martial enthusiasm of the people. The feven first centuries were filled with a rapid succession of triumphs; but it was referved for Augustus, to relinquish the ambitious design of subduing the whole earth, and to introduce a spirit of moderation into the public councils. Inclined to peace by his temper and situation, it was easy for him to discover, that Rome, in her present exalted situation, had much I is to hope than to fear from the chance of arms; and that, in the profecution of remote wars, the undertaking became every day more difficult, the event more doubtful, and the posfession more precarious, and less beneficial. The experience of Augustus added weight to these falutary reflections, and effectually convinced him, that, by the prudent vigour of his counsels, it

would be easy to secure every concession, which CHAP. the safety or the dignity of Rome might require from the most formidable Barbarians. Instead of exposing his person and his legions to the arrows of the Parthians, he obtained, by an honourable treaty, the restitution of the standards and prisoners which had been taken in the deseat of Crassus.

His generals, in the early part of his reign, attempted the reduction of Æthiopia and Arabia Felix. They marched near a thousand miles to the south of the tropic; but the heat of the climate soon repelled the invaders, and protected the unwarlike natives of those sequestered regions. The northern countries of Europe scarcely deserved the expence and labour of conquest. The forests and morasses of Germany were filled with a hardy race of barbarians, who despised life when it was separated from freedom; and though, on the first attack, they seemed to yield to the weight of the Roman power, they soon, by a signal act of despair, regained their independence, and reminded Augustus of the vicissitude of sor-

of

d

LS

1

d

7

er

r,

ad

ce

te

re

0[-

he

fa-

m,

it

uld

Dion Cassius (1. liv. p. 736.), with the annotations of Reymar, who has collected all that Roman vanity has left upon the subject. The marble of Ancyra, on which Augustus recorded his own exploits, afferts that be compelled the Parthians to restore the ensigns of Crassus.

² Strabo (l. xvi. p. 780.), Pliny the elder (Hist. Natur. l. vi. c. 32. 35.), and Dion. Cassius (l. hii. p. 723. and l. liv. p. 734.), have left us very curious details concerning these wars. The Romans made themselves masters of Mariaba, or Merab, a city of Arabia Felix, well known to the Orientals (see Abulfeda and the Nubian geography, p. 52.). They were arrived within three days journey of the Spice country, the rich object of their invasion.

THE DECLINE AND FALL

CHAP. tune 3. On the death of that emperor, his testament was publicly read in the fenate. He bequeathed, as a valuable legacy to his successors, the advice of confining the empire within those limits, which Nature seemed to have placed as its permanent bulwarks and boundaries; on the west the Atlantic ocean; the Rhine and Danube on the north; the Euphrates on the east; and towards the fouth, the fandy defarts of Arabia and Africa *.

I mitated by his fuc-ceffors.

Happily for the repose of mankind, the moderate system recommended by the wisdom of Augustus, was adopted by the fears and vices of his immediate successors. Engaged in the purfuit of pleafure, or in the exercise of tyranny, the first Cæsars seldom shewed themselves to the armies, or to the provinces; nor were they difposed to suffer, that those triumphs which their indolence neglected, should be usurped by the conduct and valour of their lieutenants. The military fame of a subject was considered as an infolent invalion of the Imperial prerogative; and it became the duty, as well as interest, of every Roman general, to guard the frontiers intrusted to his care, without aspiring to conquests which

wi

"

ava

pon

fuci

WOL

paff

³ By the flaughter of Varus and his three legions. See the first book of the Annals of Tacitus. Sueton. in August. c. 27. and Velleius Paterculus, I. ii. c. 117, &c. Augustus did not receive the melancholy news with all the temper and firmness that might have been expected from his character.

⁴ Tacit. Annal. l. ii. Dion Cassius, l. lvi. p. 833. and the speech of Augustus himself, in Julian's Cæsars. It receives great light from the learned notes of his French translator, M. Spanheim.

might have proved no less fatal to himself than to the vanquished barbarians 3:

-:

S,

fe

as

he

be

nd

112

10-

of

of

Jr-

ny,

the

lif-

beir

the

The an

and

rery

sted

nich.

e first

. and

ve the have

peech

light

iight

of Britain was the

tion to it.

The only accession which the Roman empire Conquest received, during the first century of the Christian Æra, was the province of Britain. In this fingle instance the successors of Cæsar and Augustus were perfuaded to follow the example of the former, rather than the precept of the latter. The proximity of its situation to the coast of Gaul feemed to invite their arms; the pleasing, though doubtful intelligence of a pearl fishery, attracted their avarice 6; and as Britain was viewed in the light of a distinct and insulated world, the conquest scarcely formed any exception to the general fystem of continental measures After a war of about forty years, undertaken by the most flupid 7, maintained by the most dissolute, and terminated by the most timid of all the emperors, the far greater part of the island submitted to

5 Germanicus, Suetonius Paulinus, and Agricola, were checked and recalled in the course of their victories. Corbulo was put to death. Military merit, as it is admirably expressed by Tacitus. was, in the strictest sense of the word, imperatoria virtus.

6 Cæsar himself conceals that ignoble motive; but it is mentioned by Suetonius, c 47. The British pearls proved, however, of little value, on account of their dark and livid colour. Tacitus observes, with reason (in Agricola, c. 12.), that it was an inherent defect. " Ego facilius crediderim, naturam margaritis deesse quam nobis avaritiam." and both both

7 Claudius, Nero, and Domitian. A hope is expressed by Pomponius Mela, 1. iii. c. 6. (he wrote under Claudius) that, by the success of the Roman arms, the island and its savage inhabitants would foon be better known. It is amufing enough to perufe fuch passages in the midst of London.

CHAP, the Roman yoke. The various tribes of Britons possessed valour without conduct, and the love of freedom without the spirit of union. They took up arms with favage fierceness; they laid them down, or turned them against each other with wild inconstancy; and while they fought fingly, they were successively subdued. Neither the fortitude of Caractacus, nor the despair of Boadicea, nor the fanaticism of the Druids, could avert the flavery of their country, or relift the fleady progress of the Imperial generals, who maintained the national glory, when the throne was difgraced by the weakest, or the most vicious of mankind. At the very time when Domitian, confined to his palace, felt the terrors which he inspired; his legions, under the command of the virtuous Agricola, defeated the collected force of the Caledonians at the foot of the Grampian hills; and his fleets, venturing to explore an unknown and dangerous navigation, difplayed the Roman arms round every part of the island. The conquest of Britain was considered as already atchieved; and it was the defign of Agricola to complete and enfure his fuccess by the easy reduction of Ireland, for which, in his opinion, one legion and a few auxiliaries were fufficient?. The western isle might be improved into a valuable possession, and the Britons would

See the admirable abridgment given by Tacitus, in the life of Agricola, and copiously, though perhaps not completely, illustrated by our own antiquarians, Camden and Horsley.

⁹ The Irish writers, jealous of their national honour, are extremely provoked on this occasion, both with Tacitus and with Agricola.

1-

he.

n.

ey

ch ht

er

of

ild

he

ne

us

ni-

ors

mol-

the

ex-

dif-

the

red

of

by

his

rere

ved

uld

fe of

rated

eme-

cola.

reac

wear their chains with the less reluctance, if the CHAP. prospect and example of freedom was on every fide removed from before their eyes.

But the superior merit of Agricola soon occafioned his removal from the government of Britain; and for ever disappointed this rational, though extensive scheme of conquest. Before his departure, the prudent general had provided for fecurity as well as for dominion. He had observed, that the island is almost divided into two unequal parts by the opposite gulfs, or, as they. are now called, the Friths of Scotland. Across the narrow interval of about forty miles, he had drawn a line of military stations, which was afterwards fortified in the reign of Antoninus Pius, by a turf rampart erected on foundations of stone 10. This wall of Antoninus, at a small distance beyond the modern cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, was fixed as the limit of the Roman province. The native Caledonians preserved in the northern extremity of the island their wild independence, for which they were not less indebted to their poverty than to their valour. Their incursions were frequently repelled and chastised; but their country was never subdued ". The masters of the fairest and most wealthy climates of the globe, turned with contempt from

¹⁰ See Horsley's Britannia Romana, l. i. c. 10.

The poet Buchanan celebrates, with elegance and spirit (see his Sylvæ v.), the unviolated independence of his native country. But, if the single testimony of Richard of Circneester was sufficient to create a Roman province of Vespasiana to the north of the wall, that independence would be reduced within very narrow limits.

CHAP. gloomy bills affailed by the winter tempest, from lakes concealed in a blue mift, and from cold and lonely heaths, over which the deer of the forest were chased by a troop of naked barbarians 12.

Conquest of Dacia; the fecond exception.

Such was the state of the Roman frontiers, and fuch the maxims of Imperial policy from the death of Augustus to the accession of Trajan. That virtuous and active prince had received the education of a foldier, and possessed the talents of a general 13. The peaceful system of his predecessors was interrupted by scenes of war and conquest; and the legions, after a long interval, beheld a military emperor at their head. The first exploits of Trajan were against the Dacians, the most warlike of men, who dwelt beyond the Danube, and who, during the reign of Domitian, had infulted with impunity the Majesty of Rome !t. To the strength and fierceness of barbarians, they added a contempt for life, which was derived from a warm perfuation of the immortality and transmigration of the foul 15. Decebalus, the Dacian King, approved himself a rival not unworthy of Trajan; nor did he defpair of his own and the public fortune, till, by the confession of his enemies, he had exhausted every resource both of valour and policy 16. This

¹² See Appian (in Proæm!) and the uniform imagery of Offian's Poems, which, according to every hypothesis, were composed by a native Caledonian.

¹³ See Pliny's Panegyric, which feems founded on facts.

⁷⁴ Dion Cassius, 1. Ixvii.

¹⁵ Herodotus, l. iv. c. 94. Julian in the Cæsars, with Span-16 Plin. Epili. viii. 9. heim's observations.

memorable war, with a very fhort suspension of CHAP. hostilities, lasted five years; and as the emperor could exert, without controul, the whole force of the state, it was terminated by an absolute fubmission of the barbarians 17. The new province of Dacia, which formed a second exception to the precept of Augustus, was about thirteen hundred miles in circumference. Its natural boundaries were the Niester, the Teyss, or Tibiscus, the Lower Danube, and the Euxine Sea. The veftiges of a military road may still be traced from the banks of the Danube to the neighbourhood of Bender, a place famous in modern history, and the actual frontier of the Turkish and Russian empires 45.

d

C

1.

C

ts

-

d

l,

10

S,

10

n,

of

r-

ch

n-

e-

a

e-

by

ed

nis

n's

y a

166

2.163

10-

Trajan was ambitious of fame; and as long as Conquelle mankind shall continue to bestow more liberal of Trajan in the east, applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters. The praifes of Alexander, transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in the mind of Trajan. Like him the Roman emperor undertook an expedition against the nations of the east, but he lamented with a figh, that his advanced age scarcely left him any hopes of equalling the renown of the fon of Phi lip 19. Yet the success of Trajan, however tran-

¹⁷ Dion Cassius, l. Ixviii. p. 1123. 1131. Julian in Cæsaribus. Eutropius, viii. 2. 6. Aurelius Victor in Epitome.

¹⁸ See a Memoir of M. d'Anville, on the Province of Dacia, in the Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxviii. p. 444-468.

¹⁹ Trajan's sentiments are represented in a very just and lively. manner in the Cæfars of Julian.

IO

CHAP. fient, was rapid and specious. The degenerate Parthians, broken by intestine discord, fled before his arms. He descended the river Tigris in triumph, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian gulph. He enjoyed the honour of being the first, as he was the last, of the Roman generals, who ever navigated that remote fea. His fleets ravaged the coasts of Arabia; and Trajan vainly flattered himself that he was approaching towards the confines of India 20. Every day the aftonished senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations, that acknowledged his fway. They were informed that the kings of Bosphorus, Colchos, Iberia, Albania, Osrhoene, and even the Parthian monarch himfelf, had accepted their diadems from the hands of the emperor; that the independent tribes of the Median and Carduchian hills had implored his protection; and that the rich countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, were reduced into the state of provinces 21. But the death of Trajan foon clouded the splendid prospect: and it was justly to be dreaded, that so many distant nations would throw off the unaccustomed yoke, when they were no longer restrained by the powerful hand which had imposed it.

Refigned by his fucceffor Adrian.

It was an ancient tradition, that when the Capitol was founded by one of the Roman kings, the god Terminus (who prefided over bounda-

²⁰ Eutropius and Sextus Rufus have endeavoured to perpetuate the illusion. See a very sensible differtation of M. Freret in the Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxi. p. 55.

²¹ Dion Caffius, 1, lxviii; and the Abbreviators.

ries, and was represented according to the fashion CHAP. of that age by a large stone) alone, among all the inferior deities, refused to yield his place to Jupiter himself. A favourable inference was drawn from his obstinacy, which was interpreted by the augurs, as a fure prefage that the boundaries of the Roman power would never recede 22. During many ages, the prediction, as it is usual, contributed to its own accomplishment. But though Terminus had refisted the majesty of Jupiter, he submitted to the authority of the emperor Hadrian 23. The refignation of all the eastern conquests of Trajan was the first measure of his reign. He restored to the Parthians the election of an independent Sovereign, withdrew the Roman garrisons from the provinces of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, and, in compliance with the precept of Augustus, once more established the Euphrates as the frontier of the empire 24. Censure, which arraigns the public actions and the private motives of princes, has ascribed to envy, a conduct, which might be attributed to the prudence and moderation of Hadrian. The various character of that emperor, capable, by turns, of the meanest and the most generous fentiments, may afford some colour to

²² Ovid. Fast. 1. ii. ver. 667. See Livy, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, under the reign of Tarquin.

²³ St. Augustin is highly delighted with the proof of the weakness of Terminus, and the vanity of the Augurs. See De Civitate Dei, iy. 29.

²⁴ See the Augustan History, p. 5. Jerome's Chronicle, and all the Epitomisers. It is somewhat surprising, that this memorable event should be omitted by Dion, or rather by Xiphilin.

CHAP. the suspicion. It was, however, scarcely in his power to place the fuperiority of his predeceffor in a more conspicuous light, than by thus confeffing himself unequal to the task of defending the conquests of Trajan.

Contrast of Hadrian and Antoninus Pi-

The martial and ambitious spirit of Trajan, formed a very fingular contrast with the moderation of his fuccessor. The restless activity of Hadrian was not less remarkable, when compared with the gentle repose of Antoninus Pius. The life of the former was almost a perpetual journey; and as he possessed the various talents of the foldier, the statesman, and the scholar, he gratified his curiofity in the discharge of his duty. Careless of the difference of seasons and of climates, he marched on foot, and bare-headed, over the fnows of Caledonia, and the fultry plains of the Upper Egypt; nor was there a province of the empire, which, in the course of his reign, was not honoured with the presence of the monarch 3. But the tranquil life of Antoninus Pius was spent in the bosom of Italy; and, during the twenty-three years that he directed the public administration, the longest journies of that amiable prince extended no farther than from his palace in Rome, to the retirement of his Lanuvian Villa 26.

Pacific fyftem of Hadrian and the two Antonines.

Notwithstanding this difference in their perfonal conduct, the general fystem of Augustus

²⁵ Dion, l. lxix. p. 1158. Hift. August. p. 5. 8. If all our historians were loft, medals, inscriptions, and other monuments, would be fufficient to record the travels of Hadrian.

²⁶ See the Augustan History and the Epitomes.

was equally adopted and uniformly purfued by CHAP. Hadrian and by the two Antonines. They perfifted in the defign of maintaining the dignity of the empire, without attempting to enlarge its limits. By every honourable expedient they invited the friendship of the barbarians; and endeavoured to convince mankind, that the Roman power, raifed above the temptation of conquest, was actuated only by the love of order and justice. During a long period of forty-three years their virtuous labours were crowned with fuccess; and if we except a few flight hostilities that ferved to exercise the legions of the frontier, the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius offer the fair prospect of universal peace 27. The Roman name was revered among the most remote nations of the earth. The fiercest barbarians frequently submitted their differences to the arbitration of the emperor; and we are informed by. a cotemporary historian, that he had seen ambaffadors who were refused the honour which they came to folicit, of being admitted into the rank of subjects 28.

The terror of the Roman arms added weight Defensive and dignity to the moderation of the emperors. Wars of

Antoni-

27 We must, however, remember, that, in the time of Hadrian, a nus. rebellion of the Jews raged with religious fury, though only in a fingle province: Pausanias (l. viii. c. 43.) mentions two necessary and successful wars, conducted by the generals of Pius. ist, Against the wandering Moors, who were driven into the solitudes of Atlas. 2d, Against the Brigantes of Britain, who had invaded the Roman province. Both these wars (with several other hostilities) are mentioned in the Augustan History, p. 19.

28 Appian of Alexandria, in the preface to his History of the Roman wars.

They

CHAP. They preserved peace by a constant preparation of for war; and while justice regulated their conduct, they announced to the nations on their confines, that they were as little disposed to endure, as to offer an injury. The military strength, which it had been fufficient for Hadrian and the elder Antoninus to display, was exerted against the Parthians and the Germans by the emperor Marcus. The hostilities of the barbarians provoked the refentment of that philosophic monarch, and, in the profecution of a just defence, Marcus and his generals obtained many fignal victories, both on the Euphrates, and on the Danube 29. The military establishment of the Roman empire, which thus affured either its tranquillity or fuccefs, will now become the proper and important object of our attention.

Military eltablishment of the Roman emperors.

In the purer ages of the commonwealth, the use of arms was referved for those ranks of citizens who had a country to love, a property to defend, and fome share in enacting those laws, which it was their interest, as well as duty, to maintain. But in proportion as the public freedom was lost in extent of conquest, war was gradually improved into an art, and degraded into a trade 3°. The legions themselves, even at the

C

fr

fti

tic

val

by

riu

it w

the

29 Dion, I. lxxi. Hift. August. in Marco. The Parthian vic. tories gave birth to a crowd of contemporate historians, whose memory has been rescued from oblivion, and exposed to ridicule, in a very lively piece of criticism of Lucian.

³⁰ The poorest rank of soldiers possessed above forty pounds sterling (Dionys. Halicarn. iv. 17.), a very high qualification, at a time when money was fo scarce, that an ounce of silver was equivalent

time when they were recruited in the most dif- CHAP. tant provinces, were supposed to consist of Roman citizens. That distinction was generally confidered, either as a legal qualification, or as a proper recompence for the foldier; but a more ferious regard was paid to the effential merit of age, strength, and military stature 32. In all levies, a just preference was given to the climates of the North over those of the South: the race of men born to the exercise of arms, was sought for in the country rather than in cities; and it was very reasonably presumed, that the hardy occupations of fmiths, carpenters, and huntsmen, would supply more vigour and resolution, than the fedentary trades which are employed in the fervice of luxury, 22. After every qualification of property had been laid afide, the armies of the Roman emperors were still commanded, for the most part, by officers of a liberal birth and education; but the common foldiers, like the mercenary troops of modern Europe, were drawn from the meanest, and very frequently from the most profligate, of mankind.

That public virtue which among the ancients Discipline. was denominated patriotism, is derived from a strong sense of our own interest in the preservation and prosperity of the free government of

valent to seventy pound weight of brass. The populace, excluded by the ancient conftitution, were indifcriminately admitted by Marius. See Salluft. de Bell. Jugurth. c. 91.

31 Cæfar formed his legion Alauda, of Gauls and strangers : but it was during the licence of civil war; and after the victory, he gave them the freedom of the city for their reward.

32 See Vegetius de Re Militari, l.i. c. 2-7.

which we are members. Such a sentiments which had rendered the legions of the republic almost invincible, could make but a very feeble impression on the mercenary servants of a despotic prince; and it became necessary to supply that defect by other motives, of a different, but not less forcible nature; honour and religion. The peafant, or mechanic, imbibed the ufeful prejudice that he was advanced to the more dignified profession of arms, in which his rank and reputation would depend on his own valour: and that, although the prowefs of a private foldier must often escape the notice of fame, his own behaviour might fometimes confer glory or difgrace on the company, the legion, or even the army, to whose honours he was affociated. On his first entrance into the service, an oath was administered to him, with every circumstance of folemnity. He promised never to desert his standard, to submit his own will to the commands of his leaders, and to facrifice his life for the fafety of the emperor and the empire 33. The attachment of the Roman troops to their standards, was inspired by the united influence of religion and of honour. The golden eagle, which glittered in the front of the legion, was the object of their fondest devotion; nor was it esteemed less impious, than it was ignominious,

The oath of service and fidelity to the emperor, was annually renewed by the troops, on the first of January.

to abandon that facred enfign in the hour of dan-

ger 34. These motives, which derived their

Arength

n

O

n

in

th

Wa

er

pero

piec

and of v

the

pour

and of th

36 in T

whic

manı

³⁴ Tacitus calls the Roman Eagles, Bellorum Deos. They were placed in a chapel in the camp, and with the other deities received the religious worship of the troops.

strength from the imagination, were enforced CHAP. by fears and hopes of a more substantial kind. Regular pay, occasional donatives, and a stated recompence, after the appointed time of fervice, alleviated the hardships of the military life 35, whilst, on the other hand, it was impossible for cowardice or disobedience to escape the severest punishment. The centurions were authorized to chastise with blows, the generals had a right to punish with death; and it was an inflexible maxim of Roman discipline, that a good soldier should dread his officers far more than the enemy. From fuch laudable arts did the valour of the Imperial troops receive a degree of firmness and docility, unattainable by the impetuous and irregular passions of barbarians.

And yet so sensible were the Romans of the Exercises, imperfection of valour without skill and practice, that, in their language, the name of an army was borrowed from the word which signified exercise ³⁶. Military exercises were the important

35 See Gronovius de Pecunia vetere, l. iii. p. 120, &c. The emperor Domitian raised the annual stipend of the legionaries to twelve pieces of gold, which, in his time, was equivalent to about ten of our guineas. This pay, somewhat higher than our own, had been, and was afterwards, gradually increased, according to the progress of wealth and military government. After twenty years service, the veteran received three thousand denarii (about one hundred pounds sterling), or a proportionable allowance of land. The pay and advantages of the guards were, in general, about double those of the legions.

36 Exercitus ab exercitando, Varro de Lingua Latina, l. iv. Cicero in Tusculan. l. ii. 37. There is room for a very interesting work, which should lay open the connexion between the languages and manners of nations.

VOL. I.

1

2

S

C

ń

f

S

e

e

of

107

IS

t.

55

1-

ir

ly

ed

h

C

and

CHAP. and unremitted object of their discipline. The recruits and young foldiers were constantly trained both in the morning and in the evening, nor was age or knowledge allowed to excuse the veterans from the daily repetition of what they had completely learnt. Large sheds were erected in the winter-quarters of the troops, that their useful labours might not receive any interruption from the most tempestuous weather; and it was carefully observed, that the arms destined to this imitation of war, should be of double the weight which was required in real action 37. It is not the purpose of this work to enter into any minute description of the Roman exercises. We shall only remark, that they comprehended whatever could add firength to the body, activity to the limbs, or grace to the motions. The foldiers were diligently instructed to march, to run, to leap, to swim, to carry heavy burdens, to handle every species of arms that was used either for offence or for defence, either in distant engagement or in a closer onset; to form a variety of evolutions; and to move to the found of flutes, in the Pyrrhic or martial dance 38. In the midst of peace, the Roman troops familiarised themselves with the practice of war; and it is prettily remarked by an ancient historian who had fought against them, that the effusion of blood was the

37 Vegetius, l. ii. and the rest of his first book.

only

r

W

n

C

pi

by

di

ch

m

CO

fcr

39

Jew

tory.

fixth

his v

Traja

any o

³⁸ The Pyrrhic Dance is extremely well illustrated by M. le Beau, in the Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxxv. p. 262, &c. That learned academician, in a feries of memoirs, has collected all the passages of the ancients that relate to the Roman legion.

e

or

34

id

in e-

on

as

is ht

ot ite

all rer

he

ers

to

dle

for

geof

es,

dft m-

tily

ght

the

eau,

That

the

nly

only circumstance which distinguished a sield of CHAP. battle from a field of exercise 30. It was the policy of the ablest generals, and even of the emperors themselves, to encourage these military studies by their presence and example; and we are informed that Hadrian, as well as Trajan, frequently condescended to instruct the unexperienced foldiers, to reward the diligent, and fometimes to dispute with them the prize of superior strength or dexterity 40. Under the reigns of those princes, the science of tactics was cultivated with fuccess; and as long as the empire retained any vigour, their military instructions were respected as the most perfect model of Roman discipline.

Nine centuries of war had gradually introdu- The legiced into the fervice many alterations and im- the empeprovements. The legions, as they are described by Polybius 41, in the time of the Punic wars, differed very materially from those which atchieved the victories of Cæfar, or defended the monarchy of Hadrian and the Antonines. The constitution of the Imperial legion may be described in a few words 42. The heavy-armed in-

³⁹ Joseph. de Bell. Judaico, 1. iii. c. 5. We are indebted to this Jew for some very curious details of Roman discipline.

⁴⁰ Plin. Panegyr. c. 13. Life of Hadrian, in the Augustan His-

⁴¹ See an admirable digreffion on the Roman discipline, in the fixth book of his history.

⁴² Vegetius de Re Militari, 1. ii. c. 4, &c. Considerable part of his very perplexed abridgment was taken from the regulations of Trajan and Hadrian; and the legion, as he describes it, cannot suit any other age of the Roman empire.

Arms.

CHAP. fantry, which composed its principal strength 43, was divided into ten cohorts, and fifty-five companies, under the orders of a correspondent number of tribunes and centurions. The first cohort, which always claimed the post of honour and the custody of the eagle, was formed of eleven hundred and five foldiers, the most approved for valour and fidelity. The remaining nine cohorts confifted each of five hundred and fifty-five; and the whole body of legionary infantry amounted to fix thousand one hundred men. Their arms were uniform, and admirably adapted to the nature of their fervice: an open helmet, with a lofty creft; a breast-plate, or coat of mail; greaves on their legs, and an ample buckler on their left arm. The buckler was of an oblong and concave figure, four feet in length, and two and an half in breadth, framed of a light wood, covered with a bull's hide, and strongly guarded with plates of brass. Besides a lighter fpear, the legionary foldier grasped in his right hand the formidable pilum, a ponderous javelin, whose utmost length was about six feet, and which was terminated by a maffy triangular point of steel of eighteen inches 44. This instrument was indeed much inferior to our modern fire-

C. Wiens

arms;

0 fo

p

fk

di

ti th

be

ba

a f

⁴³ Vegetius de Re Militari, l. ii. c. 1. In the purer age of Cæfar and Cicero, the word miles was almost confined to the infantry. Under the lower empire, and in the times of chivalry, it was appropriated almost as exclusively to the men at arms, who fought on horseback.

⁴⁴ In the time of Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (l. v. c. 45.), the steel point of the pilum seems to have been much longer. In the time of Vegetius, it was reduced to a foot, or even nine inches. I have chosen a medium.

3,

1-

1-

0-

ur

of

P-

ng

bn

n-

ed

oly

en

pat

ole

of

th,

ght

gly

ter

ght

lin,

and

int

ent

ire-

Cæ-

ntry.

pro-

(l. v.

nger.

nine

ms;

arms; fince it was exhausted by a fingle dif- CHAP. charge, at the distance of only ten or twelve paces. Yet when it was launched by a firm and skilful hand, there was not any cavalry that durst venture within its reach, nor any shield or corset that could fustain the impetuosity of its weight. As foon as the Roman had darted his pilum, he drew his fword, and rushed forwards to close with the enemy. His fword was a short welltempered Spanish blade, that carried a double edge, and was alike fuited to the purpose of striking or of pushing; but the foldier was always instructed to prefer the latter use of his weapon, as his own body remained less exposed, whilst he inflicted a more dangerous wound on his adverfary 45. The legion was usually drawn up eight deep; and the regular distance of three feet was left between the files as well as ranks 46. A body of troops, habituated to preserve this open order, in a long front and a rapid charge, found themselves prepared to execute every dispolition which the circumstances of war, or the skill of their leader, might suggest. The soldier possessed a free space for his arms and motions, and fufficient intervals were allowed, through which feafonable reinforcements might be introduced to the relief of the exhausted combatants 47. The tactics of the Greeks and Ma-

⁴⁵ For the legionary arms, see Lipsius de Militià Romana, 1. iii. c. 2-7.

⁴⁶ See the beautiful comparison of Virgil, Georgic. li. v. 279.

⁴⁷ M. Guichard, Memoires Militaires, tom. i. c. 4. and Nouveaux Memoires, tom. i. p. 293—311, has treated the subject like a scholar and an officer.

CHAP, cedonians were formed on very different principles. The strength of the phalanx depended on fixteen ranks of long pikes, wedged together in the closest array 48. But it was foon discovered by reflection, as well as by the event, that the strength of the phalanx was unable to contend with the activity of the legion 49.

Cavalry.

The cavalry, without which the force of the legion would have remained imperfect, was divided into ten troops or squadrons; the first, as the companion of the first cohort, consisted of an hundred and thirty-two men; whilst each of the other nine amounted only to fixty-fix. The entire establishment formed a regiment, if we may use the modern expression, of seven hundred and twenty-fix horse, naturally connected with its respective legion, but occasionally separated to act in the line, and to compose a part of the wings of the army so. The cavalry of the emperors was no longer composed, like that of the ancient republic, of the noblest youths of Rome and Italy, who, by performing their military fer+ vice on horseback, prepared themselves for the offices of fenator and conful; and folicited, by deeds of valour, the future suffrages of their countrymen st. Since the alteration of manners

n

a

ric

VO

⁴⁸ See Arrian's Tactics. With the true partiality of a Greek. Arrian rather chose to describe the phalanx, of which he had read, than the legions which he had commanded.

⁴⁹ Polyb. l. xvii.

⁵⁰ Veget. de Re Militari, I.-ii. c. 6. His positive testimony, which might be supported by circumstantial evidence, ought furely to filence those critics who refuse the Imperial legion its proper body of cavalry.

⁵ See Livy almost throughout, particularly xlii. 61.

TE.

d

er

-

10

d

10

i-

as

of

of

ne

ve

ed

th

ed

he

n- a

he

ne

r

he

by

eir

ers

ek.

ad,

nich

to

y of

nd

and government, the most wealthy of the equef- CHAP. trian order were engaged in the administration of justice, and of the revenue 52; and whenever they embraced the profession of arms, they were immediately intrusted with a troop of horse, or a cohort of foot 53. Trajan and Hadrian formed their cavalry from the fame provinces, and the fame class of their subjects, which recruited the ranks of the legion. The horses were bred, for the most part, in Spain or Cappadocia. The Roman troopers despised the complete armour with which the cavalry of the East was encumbered. Their more useful arms consisted in a helmet, an oblong shield, light boots, and a coat of mail. A javelin, and a long broad fword, were their principal weapons of offence. The use of lances and of iron maces they seem to have borrowed from the barbarians 54. non of agricus

The fafety and honour of the empire was prin- Auxiliacipally intrufted to the legions, but the policy of ries.

Rome condescended to adopt every useful instrument of war. Considerable levies were regularly
made among the provincials, who had not yet
deserved the honourable distinction of Romans.

Many dependant princes and communities, dispersed round the frontiers, were permitted, for
a while, to hold their freedom and security by the

52 Plin. Hist. Natur. xxxiii 2. The true sense of that very curious passage was first discovered and illustrated by M. de Beaufort, Republique Romaine, 1 ii. c. 2.

THE HITTER

C 4

tenure

egenna the Alani.

⁵³ As in the instance of Horace and Agricola. This appears to have been a defect in the Roman discipline; which Hadrian endeavoured to remedy, by ascertaining the legal age of a tribune.

⁵⁴ See Arrian's Tactics.

CHAP. tenure of military service 55. Even select troops of hostile barbarians were frequently compelled or perfuaded to confume their dangerous valour in remote climates, and for the benefit of the ftate 56. All these were included under the general name of auxiliaries; and howfoever they might vary according to the difference of times and circumstances, their numbers were seldom much inferior to those of the legions themfelves 57. Among the auxiliaries, the bravest and most faithful bands were placed under the command of præfects and centurions, and feverely trained in the arts of Roman discipline; but the far greater part retained those arms, to which the nature of their country, or their early habits of life, more peculiarly adapted them. By this institution each legion, to whom a certain proportion of auxiliaries was allotted, contained within itself every species of lighter troops, and of misfile weapons; and was capable of encountering every nation, with the advantages of its respective arms and discipline 38. Nor was the legion destitute of what, in modern language, would be flyled a train of artillery. It consisted in ten military engines of the largest, and fifty-five of

Artillery.

STORY ST

gardary, plenoù descorte

a fmaller

⁵⁵ Such, in particular, was the state of the Batavians. Tacit. Germania, c. 29.

⁵⁶ Marcus Antoninus obliged the vanquished Quadi and Marcomanni to fupply him with a large body of troops, which he immediately fent into Britain. Dion Cassius, 1. lxxi.

⁵⁷ Tacit. Annal. iv. 5. Those who fix a regular proportion of as many foot, and twice as many horse, confound the auxiliaries of the emperors, with the Italian allies of the republic.

⁵⁸ Vegetius, ii. 2. Arrian, in his order of march and battle against the Alani,

a smaller fize; but all of which, either in an CHAP. oblique or horizontal manner, discharged stones and darts with irrefistible violence 59.

The camp of a Roman legion presented the Encampappearance of a fortified city 60. As foon as the ment. space was marked out, the pioneers carefully levelled the ground, and removed every impediment that might interrupt its perfect regularity. Its form was an exact quadrangle; and we may calculate, that a fquare of about feven hundred vards was fufficient for the encampment of twenty thousand Romans; though a similar number of our own troops would expose to the enemy a front of more than treble that extent. In the midst of the camp, the prætorium, or general's quarters, rose above the others; the cavalry, the infantry, and the auxiliaries occupied their respective stations; the streets were broad, and perfeetly straight, and a vacant space of two hundred feet was left on all fides, between the tents and the rampart. The rampart itself was usually twelve feet high, armed with a line of strong and

1

y

e

f

n -

g

:-

n

e

n

of

it.

0-

e-

of

of

tle

er

59 The subject of the ancient machines is treated with great knowledge and ingenuity by the Chevalier Folard (Polybe, tom. ii. p. 233 -290.) He prefers them in many respects to our modern cannon and mortars. We may observe, that the use of them in the field gradually became more prevalent, in proportion as personal valour and military skill declined with the Roman empire. When men were no longer found, their place was supplied by machines. See Vegetius, ii. 25. Arrian.

60 Vegetius finishes his second book, and the description of the legion, with the following emphatic words: "Universa quæ in " quoque belli genere necessaria esse creduntur, secum legio debet " ubique portare, ut in quovis loco fixerit castra, armatam faciat " civitatem."

intricate

CHAP, intricate palisades, and defended by a ditch of twelve feet in depth as well as in breadth. This important labour was performed by the hands of the legionaries themselves; to whom the use of the spade and the pick-axe was no less familiar than that of the fword or pilum. Active valour may often be the present of nature; but such patient diligence can be the fruit only of habit and discipline 61. A character of the na gaw in ol al

March.

Whenever the trumpet gave the fignal of departure, the camp was almost instantly broke up, and the troops fell into their ranks without delay or confusion. Besides their arms, which the legionaries scarcely considered as an encumbrance. they were laden with their kitchen furniture, the instruments of fortification, and the provision of many days 62. Under this weight, which would oppress the delicacy of a modern foldier, they were trained by a regular step to advance, in about fix hours, near twenty miles 43. On the appearance of an enemy, they threw afide their baggage, and by easy and rapid evolutions converted the column of march into an order of battle 4. The flingers and archers skirmished in the front: the auxiliaries formed the first line, and were feconded or fultained by the strength of the

legions:

⁶¹ For the Roman Castremetation, see Polybius, 1. vi. with Liphus de Militia Romana, Joseph. de Bell. Jud. 1. iii. c. 5. Vegetius, i. 21-25. iii. 9. and Memoires de Guichard, tom. i. c. 1.

⁶² Cicero in Tusculan. ii. 37 .- Joseph. de Bell. Jud. 1. iii. 5. Frontinus, iv. 1...

⁶³ Vegetius, i. 9. See Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xxv. p. 187. the managed a goog at in . or

⁶⁴ See those evolutions admirably well explained by M. Guichard, Nouveaux Memoires, tom. i. p. 141-234.

legions: the cavalry covered the flanks, and the GHAP, military engines were placed in the rear.

Such were the arts of war, by which the Ro- Number man emperors defended their extensive conquests, and difand preserved a military spirit, at a time when the legievery other virtue was oppressed by luxury and despotism. If, in the consideration of their armies, we pass from their discipline to their numbers, we shall not find it easy to define them with any tolerable accuracy. We may compute, however, that the legion, which was itself a body of fix thousand eight hundred and thirty-one Romans, might, with its attendant auxiliaries, amount to about twelve thousand five hundred men. The peace establishment of Hadrian and his successors was composed of no less than thirty of these formidable brigades; and most probably formed a standing force of three hundred and seventy-five thousand men. Instead of being confined within the walls of fortified cities, which the Romans confidered as the refuge of weakness or pusillanimity, the legions were encamped on the banks of the great rivers, and along the frontiers of the barbarians. As their stations, for the most part, remained fixed and permanent, we may venture to describe the distribution of the troops. Three legions were fufficient for Britain. The principal strength lay upon the Rhine and Danube, and confifted of fixteen legions, in the following proportions: two in the Lower, and three in the Upper Germany; one in Rhætia, one in Noricum, four in Pannonia, three in Mæsia, and two in Dacia. The defence of the Euphrates was

CHAP. entrusted to eight legions, fix of whom were planted in Syria, and the other two in Cappadocia. With regard to Egypt, Africa, and Spain, as they were far removed from any important scene of war, a single legion maintained the domestic tranquillity of each of those great provinces. Even Italy was not left destitute of a military force. Above twenty thousand chosen foldiers, distinguished by the titles of City Cohorts and Prætorian Guards, watched over the fafety of the monarch and the capital. As the authors of almost every revolution that distracted the empire, the Prætorians will, very foon, and very loudly, demand our attention; but in their arms and institutions, we cannot find any circumstance which discriminated them from the legions, unless it were a more splendid appearance, and a less rigid discipline 65.

Navy.

The navy maintained by the emperors might feem inadequate to their greatness; but it was fully fufficient for every useful purpose of government. The ambition of the Romans was confined to the land; nor was that warlike people ever actuated by the enterprifing spirit which had prompted the navigators of Tyre, of Carthage, and even of Marseilles, to enlarge the bounds of the world, and to explore the most remote coasts of the ocean. To the Romans the ocean remain-

The delines of the Luphrates was

bolluning.

⁶⁵ Tacitus (Annal. iv. 5.) has given us a state of the legions under Tiberius: and Dion Cassius (l. lv. p. 794.) under Alexander Severus. I have endeavoured to fix on the proper medium between these two periods. See likewise Lipsius de Magnitudine Romana, 1. 1. C. 4, 5.

ed an object of terror rather than of curiofity 66; CHAP. the whole extent of the Mediterranean, after the destruction of Carthage, and the extirpation of the pirates, was included within their provinces. The policy of the emperors was directed only to preserve the peaceful dominion of that sea, and to protect the commerce of their subjects. With these moderate views, Augustus stationed two permanent fleets in the most convenient ports of Italy, the one at Ravenna, on the Adriatic, the other at Misenum, in the bay of Naples. Experience feems at length to have convinced the ancients, that as foon as their gallies exceeded two, or at the most three ranks of oars, they were fuited rather for vain pomp than for real service. Augustus himself, in the victory of Actium, had feen the superiority of his own light frigates (they were called Liburnians) over the lofty but unwieldy castles of his rival 67. Of these Liburnians he composed the two fleets of Ravenna and Misenum, destined to command, the one the eastern, the other the western division of the Mediterranean; and to each of the squadrons he attached a body of feveral thousand marines. Befides these two ports, which may be considered as the principal feats of the Roman navy, a very confiderable force was stationed at Frejus, on the coast of Provence, and the Euxine was guarded

66 The Romans tried to disguise, by the pretence of religious awe, their ignorance and terror. See Tacit. Germania, c. 34.

1

⁶⁷ Plutarch. in Marc. Anton. And yet, if we may credit Orofius, these monstrous castles were no more than ten feet above the water, vi. 19.

CHAP. by forty ships, and three thousand soldiers. To all these we add the fleet which preserved the communication between Gaul and Britain, and a great number of vessels constantly maintained on the Rhine and Danube, to harafs the country, or to intercept the passage of the barbarians 68. If we review this general state of the Imperial forces; of the cavalry as well as infantry; of the legions, the auxiliaries, the guards, and the navy; the most liberal computation will not allow us to fix the entire establishment by sea and by land at more than four hundred and fifty thousand blishment. men: a military power, which, however formidable it may feem, was equalled by a monarch of the last century, whose kingdom was confined within a fingle province of the Roman empire 69.

Amount of the wholeesta-

View of the provinces of the Roman empire.

Spain.

We have attempted to explain the spirit which moderated, and the strength which supported, the power of Hadrian and the Antonines. We shall now endeavour, with clearness and precifion, to describe the provinces once united under their fway, but, at prefent, divided into fo many independent and hostile states.

Spain, the western extremity of the empire, of Europe, and of the ancient world, has, in every age, invariably preserved the same natural limits; the Pyrenæan mountains, the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic Ocean. That great peninfula, at present so unequally divided be-

⁶⁸ See Lipfius, de Magnitud. Rom. 1. i. c. 5. The fixteen last chapters of Vegetius relate to naval affairs.

⁶⁹ Voltaire, Siecle de Louis XIV. c. 29. It must, however, be remembered, that France still feels that extraordinary effort.

tween two fovereigns, was distributed by Au. CHAP gustus into three provinces, Lusitania, Bætica, and Tarraconensis. The kingdom of Portugal now fills the place of the warlike country of the Lusitanians; and the loss sustained by the former, on the fide of the East, is compensated by an accession of territory towards the North. The confines of Grenada and Andalusia correspond with those of ancient Bætica. The remainder of Spain, Gallicia and the Asturias, Bifcay and Navarre, Leon and the two Castilles, Murcia, Valencia, Catalonia, and Arragon, all contributed to form the third and most considerable of the Roman governments, which, from the name of its capital, was styled the province of Tarragona 7°. Of the native barbarians, the Celtiberians were the most powerful, as the Cantabrians and Asturians proved the most obstinate. Confident in the strength of their mountains, they were the last who submitted to the arms of Rome. and the first who threw off the yoke of the Arabs.

Ancient Gaul, as it contained the whole coun- Gaul. try between the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Rhine, and the Ocean, was of greater extent than modern France. To the dominions of that powerful monarchy, with its recent acquisitions of Alface and Lorraine, we must add the dutchy of

70 See Strabo, 1. ii. It is natural enough to suppose, that Arragon is derived from Tarraconensis, and several moderns who have written in Latin, use those words as synonymous. It is however certain, that the Arragon, a little stream which falls from the Pyrenees into the Ebro, first gave its name to a country, and gradually to a kingdom. See d'Anville, Geographie du Moyen Age, p. 181.

255 111 1517

CHAP. Savoy, the cantons of Switzerland, the four electorates of the Rhine, and the territories of Liege, Luxemburgh, Hainault, Flanders, and Brabant. When Augustus gave laws to the conquests of his father, he introduced a division of Gaul equally adapted to the progress of the legions, to the course of the rivers, and to the principal national distinctions, which had comprehended above an hundred independent states 71. sea-coast of the Mediterranean, Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiné, received their provincial appellation from the colony of Narbonne. The government of Aquitaine was extended from the Pyrenees to the Loire. The country between the Loire and the Seine was styled the Celtic Gaul, and foon borrowed a new denomination from the celebrated colony of Lugdunum, or Lyons. The Belgic lay beyond the Seine, and in more ancient times had been bounded only by the Rhine; but a little before the age of Cæfar, the Germans, abusing their superiority of valour, had occupied a confiderable portion of the Belgic territory. The Roman conquerors very eagerly embraced fo flattering a circumstance, and the Gallic frontier of the Rhine, from

Basil to Leyden, received the pompous names of the Upper and the Lower Germany 72. Such,

under the reign of the Antonines, were the fix

t

n

15

a ei

al

R

na

⁷¹ One hundred and fifteen cities appear in the Notitia of Gaul; and it is well known that this appellation was applied not only to the capital town, but to the whole territory of each state. But Plutarch and Appian increase the number of tribes to three or four hundred.

⁷º D'Anville. Notice de l'Ancienne Gaule.

provinces of Gaul; the Narbonnese, Aquitaine, CHAP. the Celtic, or Lyonnese, the Belgic, and the two -Germanies. And to an instrument too surface

We have already had occasion to mention the Britain. conquest of Britain, and to fix the boundary of the Roman province in this island. It comprehended all England, Wales, and the Lowlands of Scotland, as far as the Friths of Dunbarton and Edinburgh. Before Britain loft her freedom, the country was irregularly divided between thirty tribes of barbarians, of whom the most considerable were the Belgæ in the West, the Brigantes in the North, the Silures in South Wales, and the Iceni in Norfolk and Suffolk 73. As far as we can either trace or credit the refemblance of manners and language, Spain, Gaul, and Britain were peopled by the fame hardy race of favages. Before they yielded to the Roman arms, they often disputed the field, and often renewed the contest. After their submission they constituted the western division of the European provinces, which extended from the columns of Hercules to the wall of Antoninus, and from the mouth of the Tagus to the fources of the Rhine and Danube.

Before the Roman conquest, the country which Italy. is now called Lombardy, was not confidered as a part of Italy. It had been occupied by a powerful colony of Gauls, who fettling themselves along the banks of the Po, from Piedmont to Romagna, carried their arms and diffused their name from the Alps to the Apennine. The

73 Whitaker's History of Manchester, vol. i. c. 3. VOL. I. Ligu-

CHAP. Ligurians dwelt on the rocky coast, which now forms the republic of Genoa. Venice was yet unborn: but the territories of that state, which lie to the east of the Adige, were inhabited by the Venetians 74. The middle part of the peninfula that now composes the dutchy of Tufcany and the ecclesiastical state, was the ancient seat of the Etruscans and Umbrians; to the former of whom Italy was indebted for the first rudiments of civilized life 75. The Tyber rolled at the foot of the feven hills of Rome, and the country of the Sabines, the Latins, and the Volsci, from that river to the frontiers of Naples, was the theatre of her infant victories. On that celebrated ground the first consuls deserved triumphs; their successors adorned villas, and their posterity have erected convents 76. Capua and Campania possessed the immediate territory of Naples; the rest of the kingdom was inhabited by many warlike nations, the Marsi, the Samnites, the Apulians, and the Lucanians; and the fea-coasts had been covered by the stourishing colonies of the Greeks. We may remark, that when Augustus divided Italy into eleven regions, the little province of Istria was annexed to that feat of Roman fovereignty 77.

W

C

Ci

O

th ra

he

the

Al

⁷⁴ The Italian Veneti, though often confounded with the Gauls. were more probably of Illyrian origin. See M. Freret, Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xviii.

⁷⁵ See Maffei Verona illustrata, 1. i.

⁷⁶ The first contrast was observed by the ancients. See Florus, i. 11. The fecond must strike every modern traveller.

⁷⁷ Pliny (Hift. Natur. I. iii.) follows the division of Italy, by Augustus.

The European provinces of Rome were pro- CHAP. tected by the course of the Rhine and the Danube. The latter of those mighty streams, nube and which rifes at the distance of only thirty miles Illyrian from the former, flows above thirteen hundred frontier. miles, for the most part, to the fouth-east, collects the tribute of fixty navigable rivers, and is, at length, through fix mouths, received into the Euxine, which appears scarcely equal to such an accession of waters 78. The provinces of the Danube foon acquired the general appellation of Illyricum, or the Illyrian frontier 79, and were esteemed the most warlike of the empire; but they deferve to be more particularly confidered under the names of Rhætia, Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Mæsia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece.

The province of Rhætia, which foon extin- Rhætia. guished the name of the Vindelicians, extended from the summit of the Alps to the banks of the Danube; from its fource, as far as its conflux with the Inn. The greatest part of the flat country is subject to the elector of Bavaria; the city of Augsburg is protected by the constitution of the German empire; the Grisons are safe in their mountains, and the country of Tirol is ranked among the numerous provinces of the house of Austria.

t

s,

y

e

78 Tournefort, Voyages en Grèce et Asie Mineure, lettre xviii.

⁷⁹ The name of Illyricum originally belonged to the fea-coast of the Hadriatic, and was gradually extended by the Romans from the Alps to the Euxine Sea. See Severini Pannonia, 1. i. c. 3.

nonia.

CHAP. The wide extent of territory, which is included between the Inn, the Danube, and the Save; Austria, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, the Lower Hungary and Sclavonia, was known to the ancients under the names of Noricum and Pannonia. In their original state of independence, their fierce inhabitants were intimately connected. Under the Roman government they were frequently united, and they still remain the patrimony of a fingle family. They now contain the residence of a German prince, who stiles himfelf Emperor of the Romans, and form the center, as well as strength, of the Austrian power. It may not be improper to observe, that if we except Bohemia, Moravia, the northern skirts of Austria, and a part of Hungary, between the Tey's and the Danube, all the other dominions of the House of Austria were comprised within the limits of the Roman empire.

Dalmatia, to which the name of Illyricum more properly belonged, was a long, but narrow tract, between the Save and the Adriatic. The best part of the sea-coast, which still retains its ancient appellation, is a province of the Venetian state, and the seat of the little republic of Ragusa. The inland parts have assumed the Sclavonian names of Croatia and Bosnia; the former obeys an Austrian governor, the latter a Turkish pasha; but the whole country is still infested by tribes of barbarians, whose savage independence irregularly marks the doubtful limit of the Christian and Mahometan power 80.

After

e

n

qu

the

So AVenetian traveller, the Abbate Fortis, has lately given us some account

After the Danube had received the waters of CHAP. the Teyss and the Save, it acquired, at least, among the Greeks, the name of Ister ". It for- Media and merly divided Mæsia and Dacia, the latter of which, as we have already feen, was a conquest of Trajan, and the only province beyond the river. If we inquire into the present state of those countries, we shall find that, on the left hand of the Danube, Temeswar and Transylvania have been annexed, after many revolutions, to the crown of Hungary; whilst the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia acknowledge the fupremacy of the Ottoman Porte. On the right hand of the Danube, Mæsia, which, during the middle ages, was broken into the barbarian kingdoms of Servia and Bulgaria, is again united in Turkish slavery.

bestowed by the Turks on the extensive countries nia, and of Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece, preserves the Greece. memory of their ancient state under the Roman empire. In the time of the Antonines, the martial regions of Thrace, from the mountains of Hæmus and Rhodope, to the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, had assumed the form of a province. Notwithstanding the change of masters and of religion, the new city of Rome, founded by Constantine on the banks of the Bosphorus, has

f

-

it

er

me

int

narchy.

The appellation of Roumelia, which is still Thrace,

account of those very obscure countries. But the geography and antiquities of the western Illyricum can be expected only from the munificence of the emperor, its fovereign.

ever fince remained the capital of a great mo-

The kingdom of Macedonia, which,

81 The Save rifes near the confines of Istria, and was confidered by the more early Greeks as the principal stream of the Danube.

> under D 3

GHAP. under the reign of Alexander, gave laws to Afia, derived more folid advantages from the policy of the two Philips; and with its dependencies of Epirus and Thessaly, extended from the Ægean to the Ionian sea; When we restect on the same of Thebes and Argos, of Sparta and Athens, we can scarcely persuade ourselves, that so many immortal republics of antient Greece were lost in a fingle province of the Roman empire, which, from the superior influence of the Achæan league, was usually denominated the province of Achaia.

Afia Mi-

Such was the state of Europe under the Roman emperors. The provinces of Asia, without excepting the transient conquests of Trajan, are all comprehended within the limits of the Turkish power. But, instead of following the arbitrary divisions of despotism and ignorance, it will be fafer for us, as well as more agreeable, to observe the indelible characters of nature. The name of Asia Minor is attributed with some propriety to the peninfula, which, confined between the Euxine and the Mediterranean, advances from the The most extensive Euphrates towards Europe. and flourishing district, westward of mount Taurus and the river Halys, was dignified by the Romans with the exclusive title of Asia. The jurisdiction of that province extended over the ancient monarchies of Troy, Lydia, and Phrygia, the maritime countries of the Pamphylians, Lycians, and Carians, and the Grecian colonies of Ionia, which equalled in arts, though not in arms, the glory of their parent. The kingdoms of Bithynia and Pontus poffeffed the northern fide

of the peninfula from Constantinople to Trebi- CHAP. zond. On the opposite side, the province of Cilicia was terminated by the mountains of Syria: the inland country, separated from the Roman Asia by the river Halys, and from Armenia by the Euphrates, had once formed the independent kingdom of Cappadocia. In this place we may observe, that the northern shores of the Euxine, beyond Trebizond in Asia, and beyond the Danube in Europe, acknowledged the fovereignty of the emperors, and received at their hands, either tributary princes or Roman garrisons. Budzak, Crim Tartary, Circaffia, and Mingrelia, are the modern appellations of those savage countries 82.

Under the successors of Alexander, Syria was syria, the feat of the Seleucidæ, who reigned over Up- Phœnicia, and Palei. per Asia, till the successful revolt of the Par- tine. thians confined their dominions between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean. When Syria became subject to the Romans, it formed the eaftern frontier of their empire; nor did that province, in its utmost latitude, know any other bounds than the mountains of Cappadocia to the north, and towards the fouth, the confines of Egypt, and the Red Sea. Phœnicia and Paleftine were fometimes annexed to, and fometimes separated from, the jurisdiction of Syria. The former of these was a narrow and rocky coast; the latter was a territory scarcely superior to

⁸² See the Periplus of Arrian. He examined the coasts of the Euxine, when he was governor of Cappadocia.

CHAP. Wales, either in fertility or extent. Yet Phoenicia and Palestine will for ever live in the memory of mankind; fince America, as well as Europe, has received letters from the one, and religion from the other 83. A fandy defert, alike destitute of wood and water skirts along the doubtful confine of Syrfa, from the Euphrates to the Red Sea. The wandering life of the Arabs was inseparably connected with their independence; and wherever, on fome spots less barren than the rest, they ventured to form any settled habitations, they foon became subjects to the Roman empire 84.

Egypt.

The geographers of antiquity have frequently hesitated to what portion of the globe they should ascribe Egypt 85. By its situation that celebrated kingdom is included within the immense peninfula of Africa; but it is accessible only on the fide of Asia, whose revolutions, in almost every period of history, Egypt has humbly obeyed. A Roman præfect was feated on the splendid throne of the Ptolemies; and the iron sceptre of the

³³ The progress of religion is well known. The use of letters was introduced among the favages of Europe about fifteen hundred years before Christ; and the Europeans carried them to America, about fifteen centuries after the Christian æra. But in a period of three thousand years, the Phænician alphabet received considerable alterations, as it passed through the hands of the Greeks and Romans.

⁸⁴ Dion Caffius, lib. lxviii. p. 1131.

³⁵ Ptolemy and Strabo, with the modern geographers, fix the Ifthmus of Suez as the boundary of Asia and Africa. Dionysius, Mela, Pliny, Salluft, Hirtius and Solinus, have preferred for that purpose the western branch of the Nile, or even the great Catabathmus, or defcent, which last would assign to Asia, not only Egypt, but part of Libya. Mama-

Mamalukes is now in the hands of a Turkish CHAP. pasha. The Nile slows down the country, above five hundred miles from the tropic of Cancer to the Mediterranean, and marks, on either side, the extent of fertility by the measure of its inundations, Cyrene, situate towards the west, and along the sea-coast, was first a Greek colony, afterwards a province of Egypt, and is now lost in the desert of Barca,

extends above fifteen hundred miles; yet fo closely is it pressed between the Mediterranean and the Sahara, or fandy desert, that its breadth feldom exceeds fourfcore or an hundred miles. The eastern division was considered by the Romans as the more peculiar and proper province of Africa. Till the arrival of the Phoenician colonies, that fertile country was inhabited by the Libyans, the most savage of mankind. Under the immediate jurisdiction of Carthage, it became the center of commerce and empire; but the republic of Carthage is now degenerated into the feeble and diforderly states of Tripoli and Tunis. The military government of Algiers oppresses the wide extent of Numidia, as it was once united under Massinissa and Jugurtha: but in the time of Augustus, the limits of Numidia were contracted; and, at least, two thirds of the country acquiesced in the name of Mauritania,

with the epithet of Cæsariensis. The genuine Mauritania, or country of the Moors, which, from the ancient city of Tingi, or Tan-

From Cyrene to the ocean, the coast of Africa Africa.

CHAP. gier, was distinguished by the appellation of Tingitana, is represented by the modern kingdom of Fez. Sallè, on the Ocean, so infamous at prefent for its piratical depredations, was noticed by the Romans, as the extreme object of their power, and almost of their geography. A city of their foundation may still be discovered near Mequinez, the residence of the barbarian whom we condescend to style the Emperor of Morocco; but it does not appear, that his more fouthern dominions, Morocco itself, and Segelmessa, were ever comprehended within the Roman province. The western parts of Africa are intersected by the branches of mount Atlas, a name so idly celebrated by the fancy of poets 36; but which is now diffused over the immense ocean that rolls between the ancient and the new continent 87.

The Mediterranean with its islands.

Having now finished the circuit of the Roman empire, we may observe, that Africa is divided from Spain by a narrow strait of about twelve miles, through which the Atlantic flows into the Mediterranean. The columns of Hercules, fo famous among the ancients, were two mountains

86 The long range, moderate height, and gentle declivity of mount Atlas (See Shaw's Travels, p. 5.) are very unlike a folitary mountain which rears its head into the clouds, and feems to support the heavens. The peak of Teneriff, on the contrary, rises a league and a half above the furface of the fea, and as it was frequently vifited by the Phænicians, might engage the notice of the Greek poets. See Buffon, Histoire Naturelle, tom. i. p. 312. Histoire des Voyages, tom. ii.

87 M. de Voltaire, tom. xiv. p. 297. unsupported by either fact or probability, has generously bestowed the Canary Islands on the Roman empire.

which

OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

which feemed to have been torn afunder by some CHAP. convulsion of the elements; and at the foot of the European mountain, the fortress of Gibraltar is now feated. The whole extent of the Mediterranean Sea, its coasts, and its islands, were comprised within the Roman dominion. Of the larger islands, the two Baleares, which derive their name of Majorca and Minorca from their respective size, are subject at present, the former to Spain, the latter to Great Britain. It is easier to deplore the fate, than to describe the actual condition of Corfica. Two Italian fovereigns assume a regal title from Sardinia and Sicily. Crete, or Candia, with Cyprus, and most of the smaller islands of Greece and Asia, have been fubdued by the Turkish arms; whilst the little rock of Malta defies their power, and has emerged, under the government of its military Order, into fame and opulence.

This long enumeration of provinces, whose General broken fragments have formed fo many power- idea of Roman ful kingdoms, might almost induce us to forgive empire. the vanity or ignorance of the ancients. Dazzled with the extensive sway, the irresistible strength, and the real or affected moderation of the emperors, they permitted themselves to despife, and fometimes to forget, the outlying countries which had been left in the enjoyment of a barbarous independence; and they gradually usurped the licence of confounding the Roman monarchy with the globe of the earth *8. But the

idea of the

⁸⁸ Bergier, Hist. des Grands Chemins, l. iii. c. 1, 2, 3, 4. a very useful collection.

CHAP temper, as well as knowledge, of a modern historian, require a more fober and accurate language. He may impress a juster image of the greatness of Rome, by observing that the empire was above two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus and the northern limits of Dacia, to mount Atlas and the tropic of Cancer; that it extended, in length, more than three thousand miles from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates; that it was situated in the finest part of the Temperate Zone, between the twentyfourth and fifty-fixth degrees of northern latitude; and that it was supposed to contain above fixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well cultivated land 89.

- Ladies & control desired with a particular land compression of the explanation of the same section results. world as we reasoned some for the statement of the some extended auditions out and the dispersion of the best of be the and the desirable at the contract of the same The commence of the contract o there and have been also as the state of the state of to diverge the control of the second of the last the second

one commenced the sayon source entractions of the

in the state of th

Story and the second second second second

villapparted verily has

diani

Partly transcription to high house and a representation

⁸⁹ See Templeman's Survey of the Globe: but I distrust both the doctor's learning and his maps. ed, an er the royanimigh of its and barries with

o many of the editorial also are considered in the suntained

of govern-

CHAP. II.

Of the Union and internal Prosperity of the Roman Empire, in the Age of the Antonines.

TT is not alone by the rapidity, or extent of CHAP. L conquest, that we should estimate the greatness of Rome. The sovereign of the Russian Principles deserts commands a larger portion of the globe. ment. In the seventh summer after his passage of the Hellespont, Alexander erected the Macedonian trophies on the banks of the Hyphasis '. Within less than a century, the irresistible Zingis, and the Mogul princes of his race, spread their cruel devastations and transient empire, from the sea of China, to the confines of Egypt and Germany . But the firm edifice of Roman power was raifed and preserved by the wisdom of ages. The obedient provinces of Trajan and the Antonines were united by laws, and adorned by arts. They might occasionally suffer from the partial abuse of delegated authority; but the general principle of government was wife, fimple, and beneficent. They enjoyed the religion of their ancestors, whilst in civil honours and advantages they were exalted, by just degrees, to an equality with their conquerors.

They were erected about the midway between Lahor and Dehli. The conquests of Alexander in Hindostan were confined to the Punjah, a country watered by the five great streams of the Indus.

² See M. de Guignes Histoire des Huns, l. xv, xvi, and xvii.

CHAP. II. Universalfpirit of

I. The policy of the emperors and the fenate, as far as it concerned religion, was happily feconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and toleration. by the habits of the superstitious, part of their fubiects. The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all confidered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord.

Of the people.

The superstition of the people was not embittered by any mixture of theological rancour; nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system. The devout polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rites, admitted with implicit faith the different religions of the earth 3. Fear, gratitude, and curiofity, a dream or an omen, a fingular disorder, or a distant journey, perpetually disposed him to multiply the articles of his belief, and to enlarge the lift of his protectors. The thin texture of the Pagan mythology was interwoven with various, but not discordant materials. As soon as it was allowed that fages and heroes, who had lived, or

³ There is not any writer who describes in so lively a manner as Herodotus, the true genius of Polytheism. The best commentary may be found in Mr. Hume's Natural History of Religion; and the best contrast in Bossuer's Universal History. Some obscure traces of an intolerant spirit appear in the conduct of the Egyptians (see Juvenal, Sat. xv.); and the Christians as well as Jews, who lived under the Roman empire, formed a very important exception : fo important indeed, that the discussion will require a distinct chapter of this work.

who had died for the benefit of their country, CHAP. were exalted to a state of power and immortality; it was univerfally confessed, that they deserved, if not the adoration, at least the reverence, of all mankind. The deities of a thousand groves and a thousand streams possessed, in peace, their local and respective influence; nor could the Roman who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber, deride the Egyptian who presented his offering to the beneficent genius of the Nile. The visible powers of Nature, the planets, and the elements, were the same throughout the universe. The invisible governors of the moral world were inevitably cast in a similar mould of fiction and allegory. Every virtue, and even vice, acquired its divine representative; every art and profession its patron, whose attributes, in the most distant ages and countries, were uniformly derived from the character of their peculiar votaries. A republic of gods of fuch opposite tempers and interest required, in every system, the

moderating hand of a supreme magistrate, who, by the progress of knowledge and slattery, was gradually invested with the sublime perfections of an Eternal Parent, and an Omnipotent Monarch*. Such was the mild spirit of antiquity, that the nations were less attentive to the difference, than to the resemblance, of their religious worship. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian, as

they

⁴ The rights, powers, and pretentions of the fovereign of Olympus, are very clearly described in the xvth book of the Iliad: in the Greek original, I mean; for Mr. Pope, without perceiving it, has improved the theology of Homer.

CHAP, they met before their respective altars, easily perfuaded themselves, that under various names; and with various ceremonies, they adored the fame deities. The elegant mythology of Homer gave a beautiful, and almost a regular form, to the polytheism of the ancient world.

Of philo-Sophers.

The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man, rather than from that of God. They meditated, however, on the Divine Nature, as a very curious and important fpeculation; and in the profound inquiry, they displayed the strength and weakness of the human understanding 6. Of the four most celebrated schools, the Stoics and the Platonists endeavoured to reconcile the jarring interests of reason and piety. They have left us the most sublime proofs of the existence and perfections of the first cause; but, as it was impossible for them to conceive the creation of matter, the workman in the Stoic philosophy was not sufficiently distinguished from the work; whilft, on the contrary, the spiritual God of Plato and his disciples, resembled an idea. rather than a substance. The opinions of the Academics and Epicureans were of a less religious cast; but whilst the modest science of the former induced them to doubt, the positive ig-

⁵ See for instance, Cæsar de Bell. Gall. vi. 17. Within a century or two the Gauls themselves applied to their gods the names of . Mercury, Mars, Apollo, &c.

⁶ The admirable work of Cicero de Natura Deorum, is the best clue we have to guide us through the dark and profound abyss. He represents with candour, and confutes with subtlety, the opinions of the philosophers.

norance of the latter urged them to deny, the CHAP. providence of a Supreme Ruler. The fpirit of inquiry, prompted by emulation, and supported by freedom, had divided the public teachers of philosophy into a variety of contending sects; but the ingenuous youth, who, from every part, reforted to Athens, and the other feats of learning in the Roman empire, were alike instructed in every school to reject and to despise the religion of the multitude. How, indeed, was it possible, that a philosopher should accept, as divine truths, the idle tales of the poets, and the incoherent traditions of antiquity; or, that he should adore, as gods, those imperfect beings whom he must have despised, as men! Against such unworthy adversaries, Cicero condescended to employ the arms of reason and eloquence; but the satire of Lucian was a much more adequate, as well as more efficacious weapon. We may be well affured, that a writer, conversant with the world, would never have ventured to expose the gods of his country to public ridicule, had they not already been the objects of fecret contempt among the polished and enlightened orders of fociety 7.

Notwithstanding the fashionable irreligion which prevailed in the age of the Antonines, both the interests of the priests and the credulity of the people were sufficiently respected. In their writings and conversation, the philosophers of

⁷ I do not pretend to affert, that, in this irreligious age, the natural terrors of superstition, dreams, omens, apparitions, &c. had lost their efficacy.

CHAP.

antiquity afferted the independent dignity of reafon; but they refigned their actions to the commands of law and of custom. Viewing, with a fmile of pity and indulgence, the various errors of the vulgar, they diligently practifed the ceremonies of their fathers, devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and fometimes condescending to act a part on the theatre of superstition, they concealed the sentiments of an Atheist under the facerdotal robes. Reasoners of such a temper were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith, or of worship. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might chuse to assume; and they approached, with the same inward contempt, and the fame external reverence, the altars of the Lybian, the Olympian, or the Capitoline Jupiter .

Of the magistrate. It is not easy to conceive from what motives a spirit of persecution could introduce itself into the Roman councils. The magistrates could not be actuated by a blind, though honest bigotry, since the magistrates were themselves philosophers; and the schools of Athens had given laws to the senate. They could not be impelled by ambition or avarice, as the temporal and ecclesiastical powers were united in the same hands. The pontists were chosen among the most illustrious of the senators; and the office of Supreme

³ Socrates, Epicurus, Cicero, and Plutarch, always inculcated a decent reverence for the religion of their own country, and of mankind. The devotion of Epicurus was assiduous and exemplary. Diogen. Laert. x. 10.

Pontiff was constantly exercised by the emperors CHAP. They knew and valued the advanthemselves. tages of religion, as it is connected with civil government. They encouraged the public festivals which humanize the manners of the people. They managed the arts of divination, as a convenient instrument of policy; and they respected as the firmest bond of society, the useful persuafion, that, either in this or in a future life, the crime of perjury is most assuredly punished by the avenging gods's. But whilft they acknowledged the general advantages of religion, they were convinced, that the various modes of worship contributed alike to the same salutary purposes; and that, in every country, the form of superstition, which had received the fanction of time and experience, was the best adapted to the climate, and to its inhabitants. Avarice and In the protaste very frequently despoiled the vanquished nations of the elegant statues of their gods, and the rich ornaments of their temples 10: but, in the exercise of the religion which they derived from their ancestors, they uniformly experienced the indulgence, and even protection, of the Roman conquerors. The province of Gaul feems, and indeed only feems, an exception to this universal toleration. Under the specious pretext of abolishing human facrifices, the emperors Tibe-

⁹ Polybius, 1. vi. c. 53, 54. Juvenal, Sat. xiii. laments, that in his time this apprehension had lost much of its effect.

¹⁰ See the fate of Syracuse, Tarentum, Ambracia, Corinth, &c. the conduct of Verres, in Cicero (Actio ii. Orat. 4.), and the usual practice of governors, in the viiith Satire of Juvenal.

CHAP. rius and Claudius suppressed the dangerous power of the Druids": but the priests themselves, their gods and their altars, subsisted in peaceful obscurity till the final destruction of Paganism 12.

at Rome.

Rome, the capital of a great monarchy, was incessantly filled with subjects and strangers from every part of the world 13, who all introduced and enjoyed the favourite superstitions of their native country 14. Every city in the empire was justified in maintaining the purity of its ancient ceremonies; and the Roman fenate, using the common privilege, fometimes interposed, to check this inundation of foreign rites. The Egyptian superstition, of all the most contemptible and abject, was frequently prohibited; the temples of Serapis and Isis demolished, and their worshippers banished from Rome and Italy 13. But the zeal of fanaticism prevailed over the cold and feeble efforts of policy. The exiles returned, the profelytes multiplied, the temples were restored with increasing splendor, and Isis and

Serapis

[&]quot; Sueton. in Claud .- Plin. Hift. Nat. xxx. 1.

¹² Pelloutier Histoire des Celtes, tom. vi. p. 230-252.

^{- 13} Seneca Consolat. ad Helviam, p. 74. Edit. Lips.

¹⁴ Dionysius Halicarn. Antiquitat. Roman. 1. ii.

¹⁵ In the year of Rome 701, the temple of Isis and Serapis was demolished by the order of the senate (Dion Cassius, l. xl. p. 252.). and even by the hands of the conful (Valerius Maximus, 1. 3.). After the death of Cæfar, it was reftored at the public expence (Dion, l. xlvii. p. 501.). When Augustus was in Egypt, he revered the majesty of Serapis (Dion, l. li. p. 647.); but in the Pomærium of Rome, and a mile round it, he prohibited the worship of the Egyptian gods (Dion, I. liii. p. 679. l. liv. p. 735.). They remained, however, very fashionable under his reign (Ovid. de Art. Amand. I. i.) and that of his fuccessor, till the justice of Tiberius was provoked to some acts of severity. (See Tacit. Annal. ii. 85. Joseph. Antiquit. 1. xviii. c: 3-)

Scrapis at length affumed their place among the CHAP. Roman deities 16. Nor was this indulgence a departure from the old maxims of government. In the purest ages of the commonwealth, Cybele and Æsculapius had been invited by solemn embaffies 17; and it was customary to tempt the protectors of belieged cities, by the promise of more diftinguished honours than they possessed in their native country 18. Rome gradually became the common temple of her subjects; and the freedom of the city was bestowed on all the gods of mankind 19.

II. The narrow policy of preserving, without Freedom any foreign mixture, the pure blood of the ancient citizens, had checked the fortune, and haftened the ruin, of Athens and Sparta. The afpiring genius of Rome facrificed vanity to ambition, and deemed it more prudent, as well as honourable, to adopt virtue and merit for her own wherefoever they were found, among flaves or strangers, enemies or barbarians 20. During the most flourishing æra of the Athenian commonwealth, the number of citizens gradually de-

creased from about thirty 23 to twenty-one thou-

¹⁶ Tertullian in Apologetic. c. 6. p. 74. Edit. Havercamp. I am inclined to attribute their establishment to the devotion of the Flavian family.

¹⁷ See Livy, l. xi. and xxix.

¹⁸ Macrob. Saturnalia, l. iii. c. 9. He gives us a form of evo-

¹⁹ Minutius Fælix in Octavio, p. 54. Arnobius, I. vi. p. 115.

²⁰ Tacit. Annal. xi. 24. The Orbis Romanus of the learned Spanheim, is a complete history of the progressive admission of Latium, Italy, and the provinces, to the freedom of Rome.

Herodotus, v. 97. It should seem, however, that he followed a large and popular estimation.

CHAP. fand .. If, on the contrary, we fludy the growth of the Roman republic, we may discover, that, notwithstanding the incessant demands of wars and colonies, the citizens, who, in the first cenfus of Servius Tullius, amounted to no more than eighty-three thousand, were multiplied, before the commencement of the focial war, to the number of four hundred and fixty-three thoufand men, able to bear arms in the service of their country 23. When the allies of Rome claimed an equal share of honours and privileges, the fenate indeed preferred the chance of arms to an ignominious concession. The Samnites and the Lucanians paid the fevere penalty of their rashness; but the rest of the Italian states, as they fuccessively returned to their duty, were admitted into the bosom of the republic 24, and soon contributed to the ruin of public freedom. Under a democratical government, the citizens exercise the powers of sovereignty; and those powers will be first abused, and afterwards lost, if they are committed to an unwieldy multitude. But when the popular affemblies had been fuppressed by the administration of the emperors, the conquerors were diftinguished from the vanquished nations, only as the first and most honourable order of subjects; and their increase, however rapid, was no longer exposed to the same dangers,

²² Athenæus Deipnosophist. I. vi. p. 272. Edit. Casaubon. Meprhus de Fortuna Attica, c. 4.

^{23.} See a very accurate collection of the numbers of each Lustrum in M. de Beaufort, Republique Romaine, 1. iv. c. 4.

²⁴ Appian. de Bell. civil, I. i. Velleius Paterculus, I. ii. c. 15, 16, 17,

Yet the wifest princes, who adopted the maxims CHAP. of Augustus, guarded with the strictest care the dignity of the Roman name, and diffused the freedom of the city with a prudent liberality as.

Till the privileges of Romans had been pro- Italy. greffively extended to all the inhabitants of the empire, an important distinction was preserved between Italy and the provinces. The former was esteemed the centre of public unity, and the firm basis of the constitution. Italy claimed the birth, or at least the residence, of the emperors and the fenate 26. The estates of the Italians were exempt from taxes, their persons from the arbitrary jurisdiction of governors. Their municipal corporations, formed after the perfect model of the capital, were intrusted, under the immediate eye of the supreme power, with the execution of the laws. From the foot of the Alps to the extremity of Calabria, all the natives of Italy were born citizens of Rome. Their partial distinctions were obliterated, and they infenfibly coalefced into one great nation, united by language, manners, and civil institutions, and equal to the weight of a powerful empire. The republic gloried in her generous policy, and was frequently rewarded by the merit and fervices of

²⁵ Mæcenas had advised him to declare by one edict, all his subjects, citizens. But we may justly suspect that the historian Dion was the author of a counsel, so much adapted to the practice of his own age, and so little to that of Augustus.

²⁶ The fenators were obliged to have one-third of their own landed property in Italy. See Plip. 1. vi. ep. 19. The qualification was reduced by Marcus to one-fourth. Since the reign of Trajan, Italy had funk nearer to the level of the provinces.

CHAP. her adopted fons, Had she always confined the distinction of Romans to the ancient families within the walls of the city, that immortal name would have been deprived of some of its noblest ornaments. Virgil was a native of Mantua; Horace was inclined to doubt whether he should call himself an Apulian or a Lucanian; it was in Padua that an historian was found worthy to record the majestic series of Roman victories. The patriot family of the Catos emerged from Tufculum; and the little town of Arpinum claimed the double honour of producing Marius and Cicero, the former of whom deserved, after Romulus and Camillus, to be styled the Third Founder of Rome; and the latter, after faving his country from the designs of Catiline, enabled her to contend with Athens for the palm of eloquence 27.

The provinces.

The provinces of the empire (as they have been described in the preceding chapter) were destitute of any public force, or constitutional freedom. In Etruria, in Greece 28, and in Gaul 29, it was the first care of the senate to dissolve those dangerous confederacies, which taught mankind, that, as the Roman arms prevailed by division,

²⁷ The first part of the Verona Illustrata of the Marquis Maffei. gives the clearest and most comprehensive view of the state of Italy under the Cæfars.

²⁸ See Paufanias, 1. vii. The Romans condescended to restore the names of those assemblies, when they could no longer be dan-

²⁹ They are frequently mentioned by Cæsar. The Abbé Dubos attempts, with very little fuccess, to prove that the assemblies of Gaul were continued under the emperors. Histoire de l'Etablissement de la Monarchie Françoise, l. i. c. 4.

they might be resisted by union. Those princes, CHAP whom the oftentation of gratitude or generofity permitted for a while to hold a precarious fceptre, were dismissed from their thrones, as soon as they had performed their appointed task of fafhioning to the yoke the vanquished nations. The free states and cities which had embraced the cause of Rome, were rewarded with a nominal alliance, and infenfibly funk into real fervi-The public authority was every where exercised by the ministers of the senate and of the emperors, and that authority was absolute, and without control. But the fame falutary maxims of government, which had fecured the peace and obedience of Italy, were extended to the most distant conquests. A nation of Romans was gradually formed in the provinces, by the double expedient of introducing colonies, and of admitting the most faithful and deserving of the provincials to the freedom of Rome.

"Wheresoever the Roman conquers, he in- Colonies "habits," is a very just observation of Seneca 30, and municonfirmed by history and experience. The na- towns. tives of Italy, allured by pleasure or by interest, hastened to enjoy the advantages of victory; and we may remark, that, about forty years after the reduction of Asia, eighty thousand Romans were massacred in one day, by the cruel orders of Mithridates 31. These voluntary exiles were en-

³⁰ Seneca in Confolat. ad Helviam, c. 6.

³¹ Memnon apud Photium, c. 33. Valer. Maxim. ix. 2. Plutarch and Dion Cassius swell the massacre to 150,000 citizens; but I should esteem the smaller number to be more than sufficient.

CHAP. gaged, for the most part, in the occupations of commerce, agriculture, and the farm of the revenue. But after the legions were rendered permanent by the emperors, the provinces were peopled by a race of foldiers; and the veterans, whether they received the reward of their service in land or in money, usually settled with their families in the country, where they had honourably spent their youth. Throughout the empire, but more particularly in the western parts, the most fertile districts, and the most convenient fituations, were reserved for the establishment of colonies; fome of which were of a civil, and others of a military nature. In their manners and internal policy, the colonies formed a perfect representation of their great parent; and they were foon endeared to the natives by the ties of friendship and alliance, they effectually diffused a reverence for the Roman name, and a defire, which was feldom disappointed, of sharing, in due time, its honours and advantages 32. The municipal cities infenfibly equalled the rank and fplendour of the colonies; and in the reign of Hadrian, it was disputed which was the preferable condition, of those societies which had iffued from, or those which had been received into. the bosom of Rome 33. The right of Latium,

³² Twenty-five colonies were fettled in Spain (fee Plin. Hift. Natur. iii. 3, 4. iv. 35.): and nine in Britain, of which London, Colchefter, Lincoln, Chefter, Gloucester, and Bath, still remain considerable cities (fee Richard of Cirencester, p. 36, and Whitaker's History of Manchester, I. i. c. 3.)

³³ Aul. Gell. Noctes Atticæ, xvi. 13. The emperor Hadrian expressed his furprise, that the cities of Utica, Gades, and Itatica,

as it was called, conferred on the cities to which CHAP. it had been granted, a more partial favour. The magistrates only, at the expiration of their office, affumed the quality of Roman citizens; but as those offices were annual, in a few years they circulated round the principal families 34. Those of the provincials who were permitted to bear arms in the legions 35; those who exercised any civil employment; all, in a word, who performed any public fervice, or displayed any personal talents, were rewarded with a present, whose value was continually diminished by the increasing liberality of the emperors. Yet even, in the age of the Antonines, when the freedom of the city had been bestowed on the greater number of their subjects, it was still accompanied with very folid advantages. The bulk of the people acquired, with that title, the benefit of the Roman laws, particularly in the interesting articles of marriage, testaments, and inheritances; and the road of fortune was open to those whose pretensions were seconded by favour or merit. The grandfons of the Gauls, who had belieged Julius Cæfar in Alefia, commanded legions, governed provinces, and were admitted into the fenate of Rome 36. Their ambition, instead of disturbing the tranquillity of the state, was intimately connected with its fafety and greatness.

which already enjoyed the rights of Municipia, should solicit the title of colonies. Their example, however, became fashionable, and the empire was filled with honorary colonies. See Spanheim, de Usu Numismatum, Differtat. xiii.

³⁴ Spanheim, Orbis Roman, c. 8. p. 62.

³⁵ Ariftid. in Romæ Encomio, tom. i. p. 218. Edit. Jebb.

¹⁵ Tacit. Annal, xi. 23, 24. Hift. iv. 74.

Division of the Latin and the Greek provinces.

So fensible were the Romans of the influence of language over national manners, that it was their most serious care to extend, with the progress of their arms, the use of the Latin tongue 37. The ancient dialects of Italy, the Sabine, the Etruscan, and the Venetian, sunk into oblivion; but in the provinces, the east was less docile than the west, to the voice of its victorious preceptors. This obvious difference marked the two portions of the empire with a distinction of colours, which, though it was in some degree concealed during the meridian splendor of profperity, became gradually more visible, as the shades of night descended upon the Roman world. The western countries were civilized by the same hands which subdued them. As foon as the barbarians were reconciled to obedience, their minds were opened to any new impressions of knowledge and politeness. The language of Virgil and Cicero, though with fome inevitable mixture of corruption, was fo univerfally adopted in Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Pannonia 38, that the faint traces of the Punic or Celtic idioms were preserved only in the mountains, or among the peafants 39. Education and study infensibly

³⁷ See Plin. Hist. Natur. iii. 5. Augustin. de Civitate Dei, xix. 7. Lipsius de pronunciatione Linguæ Latinæ, c. 3.

³⁸ Apuleius and Augustin will answer for Africa; Strabo for Spain and Gaul; Tacitus, in the life of Agricola, for Britain; and Velleius Paterculus, for Pannonia. To them we may add the language of the Inscriptions.

³⁹ The Celtic was preserved in the mountains of Wales, Cornwall, and Armorica. We may observe that Apuleius reproaches an

fenfibly inspired the natives of those countries CHAP. with the fentiments of Romans; and Italy gave fashions, as well as laws, to her Latin provin-They folicited with more ardour, and obtained with more facility, the freedom and honours of the state; supported the national dignity in letters 40 and in arms; and, at length, in the person of Trajan, produced an emperor whom the Scipios would not have disowned for their countryman. The fituation of the Greeks was very different from that of the barbarians. The former had been long fince civilized and corrupted. They had too much taste to relinquish their language, and too much vanity to adopt any foreign institutions. Still preserving the prejudices, after they had lost the virtues, of their ancestors, they affected to despise the unpolished manners of the Roman conquerors, whilst they were compelled to respect their superior wisdom and power 41. Nor was the influence of the Grecian language and fentiments confined to the narrow limits of that once celebrated country. Their empire, by the progress of colonies and conquest, had been diffused from the Hadriatic to the Euphrates and the Nile. Asia

African youth, who lived among the populace, with the use of the Punic; whilft he had almost forgot Greek, and neither could nor would speak Latin (Apolog. p. 596.). The greater part of St. Austin's congregations were strangers to the Punic.

40 Spain alone produced Columella, the Senecas, Lucan, Martial,

41 There is not, I believe, from Dionysius to Libanius, a single Greek critic who mentions Virgil or Horace. They feem ignorant that the Romans had any good writers.

CHAP.

was covered with Greek cities, and the long reign of the Macedonian kings had introduced a filent revolution into Syria and Egypt. In their pompous courts those princes united the elegance of Athens with the luxury of the East, and the example of the court was imitated, at an humble distance, by the higher ranks of their subjects. Such was the general division of the Roman empire into the Latin and Greek languages. these we may add a third distinction for the body of the natives in Syria, and especially in Egypt. The use of their ancient dialects, by secluding them from the commerce of mankind, checked the improvements of those barbarians 42. The flothful effeminacy of the former, exposed them to the contempt; the fullen ferociousness of the latter, excited the aversion of the conquerors 43. Those nations had submitted to the Roman power, but they seldom desired or deserved the freedom of the city; and it was remarked, that more than two hundred and thirty years elapsed after the ruin of the Ptolemies, before an Egyptian was admitted into the fenate of Rome 44.

General use of both languages. It is a just though trite observation, that victorious Rome was herself subdued by the arts of Greece. Those immortal writers who still command the admiration of modern Europe, soon became the favourite object of study and imita-

⁴² The curious reader may fee in Dupin (Bibliotheque Ecclehastique, tom. xix. p. 1. c. 8.) how much the use of the Syriac and Egyptian languages was still preserved.

⁴³ See Juvenal, Sat. iii. and xv. Ammian. Marcellin. xxii. 16.
44 Dion Cassius, l. lxxvii. p. 1275. The first instance happened under the reign of Septimius Severus.

tion in Italy and the western provinces. But the CHAP. elegant amusements of the Romans were not suffered to interfere with their found maxims of policy. Whilst they acknowledged the charms of the Greek, they afferted the dignity of the Latin tongue, and the exclusive use of the latter was inflexibly maintained in the administration of civil as well as military government 45. The two languages exercifed at the same time their separate jurisdiction throughout the empire: the former, as the natural idiom of science; the latter, as the legal dialect of public transactions. Those who united letters with business, were equally conversant with both; and it was almost impossible, in any province, to find a Roman fubject, of a liberal education, who was at once a stranger to the Greek and to the Latin language.

It was by fuch institutions that the nations of slaves. the empire inferfibly melted away into the Roman name and people. But there still remained, in the centre of every province and of every family, an unhappy condition of men who endured the weight, without sharing the benefits, of fociety. In the free states of antiquity, the domestic slaves were exposed to the wanton rigour of despotism. The perfect settlement of the Their Roman empire was preceded by ages of violence treatment. and rapine. The flaves confifted, for the most part, of barbarian captives, taken in thousands

⁴⁵ See Valerius Maximus, I. ii. c. 2. n. 2. The emperor Claudius disfranchised an eminent Grecian for not understanding Latin. He was probably in some public office. Suetonius in Claud. c. 16.

CHAP. by the chance of war, purchased at a vile price 45; accustomed to a life of independence, and impatient to break and to revenge their fetters. Against such internal enemies, whose desperate insurrections had more than once reduced the republic to the brink of destruction 47, the most fevere regulations 48, and the most cruel treatment, feemed almost justified by the great law of felf-preservation. But when the principal nations of Europe, Asia, and Africa, were united under the laws of one fovereign, the fource of foreign fupplies flowed with much less abundance, and the Romans were reduced to the milder but more tedious method of propagation. In their numerous families, and particularly in their country estates, they encouraged the marriage of their flaves. The fentiments of nature, the habits of education, and the possession of a dependent species of property, contributed to alleviate the hardships of servitude 49. The existence of a flave became an object of greater value, and though his happiness still depended on the temper and circumstances of the master, the humanity of the latter, instead of being restrained by

⁴⁶ In the camp of Lucullus, an ox fold for a drachma, and a flave for four drachmæ, or about three shillings. Plutarch. in Lucull.

⁴⁷ Diodorus Siculus in Eclog. Hift, I. xxxiv. and xxxvi. Florus, iii. 19, 20.

⁴⁸ See a remarkable instance of severity in Cicero in Verrem, v. 3. 49 See in Gruter, and the other collectors, a great number of infcriptions addressed by slaves to their wives, children, fellowfervants, masters, &c. They are all most probably of the Imperial

fear, was encouraged by the fense of his own in-CHAP. terest. The progress of manners was accelerated by the virtue or policy of the emperors; and by the edicts of Hadrian and the Antonines, the protection of the laws was extended to the most abject part of mankind. The jurisdiction of life and death over the slaves, a power long exercised and often abused, was taken out of private hands, and reserved to the magistrates alone. The subterraneous prisons were abolished; and, upon a just complaint of intolerable treatment, the injured slave obtained either his deliverance, or a less cruel master 5°.

Hope, the best comfort of our impersect con-Enfrandition, was not denied to the Roman slave; and chisements if he had any opportunity of rendering himself either useful or agreeable, he might very naturally expect that the diligence and sidelity of a few years would be rewarded with the inestimable gift of freedom. The benevolence of the master was so frequently prompted by the meaner suggestions of vanity and avarice, that the laws found it more necessary to restrain than to encourage a profuse and undistinguishing liberality, which might degenerate into a very dangerous abuse states a state of the same of antient jurisprudence, that a slave had not any country of his own, he acquired with his liberty an admission into the political

THEFT

ny, in the xxxvth volume of the Academy of Inscriptions, upon the Roman slaves.

See another Differtation of M. de Burigny in the xxxviith vo-

CHAP. fociety of which his patron was a member. The confequences of this maxim would have proftituted the privileges of the Roman city to a mean and promiscuous multitude. Some seasonable exceptions were therefore provided; and the honourable diffinction was confined to such slaves only, as for just causes, and with the approbation of the magistrate, should receive a solemn and legal manumission. Even these chosen freedmen obtained no more than the private rights of citizens, and were rigoroully excluded from civil or military honours. Whatever might be the merit or fortune of their fons, they likewise were esteemed unworthy of a feat in the senate; nor were the traces of a fervile origin allowed to be completely obliterated till the third or fourth generation 52. Without destroying the distinction of ranks, a diffant prospect of freedom and honours was presented, even to those whom pride and prejudice almost disdained to number among the human species. Designory maupon of any

Numbers.

It was once proposed to discriminate the slaves. by a peculiar habit; but it was juftly apprehended that there might be some danger in acquainting them with their own numbers 53. Without interpreting, in their utmost strictness, the liberal appellations of legions and myriads st well

⁵² Spanheim, Orbis Roman 1. i. c. 16. p. 124, &c.

⁵³ Seneca de Clementia, l. i. c. 24. The original is much stronger, " Quantum periculum immineret si servi nostri numerare nos coepiffento'to and initial in yandone, and to analog diverse of or va

⁵⁴ See Pliny (Hift. Natur. 1. xxxiii.) and Athenaus (Deipnofophift. 1. vi. p. 272.) The latter boldly afferts, that he knew very many (πεμπολλοι) Romans who possessed, not for use, but oftentation, ten and even twenty thousand flaves. Voic L

thay venture to pronounce, that the proportion CHAP. of flaves, who were valued as property, was more confiderable than that of fervants, who can be computed only as an expence 35. The youths of a promiting genius were instructed in the arts and fciences, and their price was afcertained by the degree of their skill and talents 56. Almost every profession, either liberal st or mechanical, might be found in the household of an opulent fenator. The ministers of pomp and fenfuality were multiplied beyond the conception of modern luxury 58. It was more for the interest of the merchant or manufacturer to purchase, than to hire his workmen; and in the country, flaves were employed as the cheapest and most laborious instruments of agriculture. To confirm the general observation, and to display the multitude of flaves, we might allege a variety of particular instances. It was discovered, on a very melancholy occasion, that four hundred flaves were maintained in a fingle palace of Rome 59. The same number of four hundred belonged to an estate which an African widow, of a very private

⁵⁵ In Paris there are not more than 43,700 domestics of every fort, and not a twelfth part of the inhabitants. Messange Recherches fur la Population, p. 186.

⁵⁶ A learned flave fold for many hundred pounds fterling; Atticus always bred and taught them himself. Cornel. Nepos in Vit. C. 13.

⁵⁷ Many of the Roman physicians were flaves. See Dr. Middlefon's Differtation and Defence.

⁵⁸ Their ranks and offices are very copioufly enumerated by Pignorius de Servis.

⁵⁹ Tacit. Annal. xiv. 43. They were all executed for not preventing their mafter's murder.

CHAP. condition, refigned to her fon, whilst she referved for herself a much larger share of her property 60. A freedman, under the reign of Augustus, though his fortune had fuffered great losses in the civil wars, left behind him three thousand six hundred yoke of oxen, two hundred and fifty thousand head of smaller cattle, and, what was almost included in the description of cattle, four thousand one hundred and fixteen flaves 61.

Populoufness of the Roman empire.

The number of fubjects who acknowledged the laws of Rome, of citizens, of provincials, and of flaves, cannot now be fixed with fuch a degree of accuracy, as the importance of the object would deserve. We are informed, that when the emperor Claudius exercifed the office of cenfor, he took an account of fix millions nine hundred and forty-five thousand Roman citizens, who, with the proportion of women and children, must have amounted to about twenty millions of fouls. The multitude of subjects of an inferior rank, was uncertain and fluctuating. But, after weighing with attention every circumstance which could influence the balance, it feems probable, that there existed, in the time of Claudius, about twice as many provincials as there were citizens, of either fex, and of every age; and that the slaves were at least equal in number to the free inhabitants of the Roman world. The total amount of this imperfect calculation would rife to about one hundred and twenty millions of persons: a degree of popu-

⁶⁰ Apuleius in Apolog. p. 548. Edit. Delphin,

⁶¹ Plin. Hift. Natur. 1. xxxiii. 47.

lation which possibly exceeds that of modern CHAP. Europe 62, and forms the most numerous society that has ever been united under the same system of government.

and union.

Domestic peace and union were the natural Obedience consequences of the moderate and comprehensive policy embraced by the Romans. If we turn our eves towards the monarchies of Asia, we shall behold despotism in the center, and weakness in the extremities; the collection of the revenue, or the administration of justice, enforced by the presence of an army; hostile barbarians established in the heart of the country, hereditary fatraps usurping the dominion of the provinces, and subjects inclined to rebellion, though incapable of freedom. But the obedience of the Roman world was uniform, voluntary, and permanent. The vanquished nations, blended into one great people, refigned the hope, nay even the wish, of refuming their independence, and fcarcely confidered their own existence as distinct from the existence of Rome. The established authority of the emperors pervaded without an effort the wide extent of their dominions, and was exercised with the same facility on the banks of the Thames, or of the Nile, as on those of the Tyber.

⁶² Compute twenty millions in France, twenty-two in Germany, four in Hungary, ten in Italy with its islands, eight in Great Britain and Ireland, eight in Spain and Portugal, ten or twelve in the European Russia, fix in Poland, fix in Greece and Turkey, four in Sweden, three in Denmark and Norway, four in the Low Countries, The whole would amount to one hundred and five, or one hundred and seven millions. See Voltaire, de Histoire Generale.

CHAP. legions were destined to serve against the public enemy, and the civil magistrate seldom required the aid of a military force 63. In this state of general fecurity, the leifure as well as opulence both of the prince and people, were devoted to improve and to adorn the Roman empire.

Roman monuments.

Among the innumerable monuments of architecture constructed by the Romans, how many have escaped the notice of history, how few have refifted the ravages of time and barbarism! And yet even the majestic ruins that are still scattered over Italy and the provinces, would be sufficient to prove, that those countries were once the feat of a polite and powerful empire. Their greatness alone, or their beauty, might deserve our attention; but they are rendered more interesting, by two important circumstances, which connect the agreeable history of the arts, with the more useful history of human manners. Many of those works were erected at private expence, and almost all were intended for public benefit.

Many of them eprivate expence.

It is natural to suppose that the greatest number, as well as the most considerable of the Roman edifices, were raifed by the emperors, who poffessed so unbounded a command both of men and money. Augustus was accustomed to boast that he had found his capital of brick, and that he had left it of marble 64. The strict œconomy of

61 Joseph. de Bell. Judaico, l. ii. c. 16. The oration of Agrippa, or rather of the historian, is a fine picture of the Roman empire.

⁶⁴ Sucton. in August. c. 28. Augustus built in Rome the temple and forum of Mars the Avenger; the temple of Jupiter Tonans in the Capitol;

of Vespasian was the source of his magnificence. CHAP. The works of Trajan bear the stamp of his genius. The public monuments with which Hadrian adorned every province of the empire, were executed not only by his orders, but under his immediate inspection. He was himself an artist; and he loved the arts, as they conduced to the glory of the monarch. They were encouraged by the Antonines, as they contributed to the happinels of the people. But if the emperors were the first, they were not the only architects of their dominions. Their example was univerfally imitated by their principal subjects, who were not afraid of declaring to the world that they had spirit to conceive, and wealth to accomplish, the noblest undertakings. Scarcely had the proud structure of the Colifeum been dedicated at Rome, before the edifices of a smaller scale indeed, but of the same design and materials, were erected for the use, and at the expence, of the cities of Capua and Verona 65. The infcription of the stupendous bridge of Alcantara, attests that it was thrown over the Tagus by the contribution of a few Lusitanian communities. When Pliny was intrusted with the government of Bithynia and Pontus, provinces by no means the richest or most considerable of the empire, he found the cities within his jurisdiction striving with each

Capitol; that of Apollo Palatine, with public libraries; the portico and basilica of Caius and Lucius, the porticoes of Livia and Octavia, and the theatre of Marcellus. The example of the fovereign was imitated by his ministers and generals; and his friend Agrippa left behind him the immortal monument of the Pantheon.

65 See Maffei, Verona illustrata, I. iv. p. 68.

product

CHAP. other in every useful and ornamental work, that might deserve the curiosity of strangers, or the gratitude of their citizens. It was the duty of the Proconful to supply their deficiencies, to direct their taste, and sometimes to moderate their emulation 66. The opulent senators of Rome and the provinces esteemed it an honour, and almost an obligation, to adorn the splendour of their age and country; and the influence of fashion very frequently supplied the want of taste or generosity. Among a crowd of these private benefactors, we may felect Herodes Atticus, an Athenian citizen, who lived in the age of the Antonines. Whatever might be the motive of his conduct, his magnificence would have been worthy of the greatest kings.

Example of Herodes Atticus.

The family of Herod, at least after it had been favoured by fortune, was lineally descended from Cimon and Miltiades, Theseus and Cecrops, Æacus and Jupiter. But the posterity of so many gods and heroes was fallen into the most abject state. His grandfather had suffered by the hands of justice, and Julius Atticus, his father, must have ended his life in poverty and contempt, had he not discovered an immense treasure buried under an old house, the last remains of his patrimony. According to the rigour of law, the emperor might have afferted his claim, and the

prudent

⁶⁶ See the xth book of Pliny's Epiftles. He mentions the following works, carried on at the expence of the cities. At Nicomedia, a new forum, an aqueduct, and a canal, left unfinished by a king; at Nice, a Gymnasium, and a theatre which had already cost near ninety thousand pounds; baths at Prusa and Claudiopolis; and an aqueduct of fixteen miles in length for the use of Sinope.

prudent Atticus prevented, by a frank confession, CHAP. the officiousness of informers. But the equitable Nerva, who then filled the throne, refused to accept any part of it, and commanded him to use, without scruple, the present of fortune. The cautious Athenian still insisted, that the treasure was too considerable for a subject, and that he knew not how to use it. Abuse it, then, replied the monarch, with a good-natured peevishness; for it is your own 67. Many will be of opinion, that Atticus literally obeyed the emperor's last instructions; since he expended the greatest part of his fortune, which was much increafed by an advantageous marriage, in the fervice of the Public. He had obtained for his fon Herod, the prefecture of the free cities of Alia; and the young magistrate, observing that the town of Troas was indifferently supplied with water, obtained from the munificence of Hadrian, three hundred myriads of drachms (about a hundred thousand pounds) for the construction of a new aqueduct. But in the execution of the work the charge amounted to more than double the estimate, and the officers of the revenue began to murmur, till the generous Atticus filenced their complaints, by requesting that he might be permitted to take upon himfelf the whole additional expence 68.

⁶⁷ Hadrian afterwards made a very equitable regulation, which divided all treasure-trove between the right of property and that of discovery. Hist. August. p. 9.

⁶⁸ Philostrat, in Vit. Sophist. 1. ii. p. 548.

CHAP. The ablest preceptors of Greece and Asia had been invited by liberal rewards to direct the education of young Herod. Their pupil foon became a celebrated orator according to the ufeless rhetoric of that age, which, contining itself to the schools, disdained to visit either the Forum or the Senate. He was honoured with the confulfhip at Rome; but the greatest part of his life was spent in a philosophic retirement at Athens, and his adjacent villas; perpetually furrounded by fophists, who acknowledged, without reluctance, the superiority of a rich and generous rival 69. The monuments of his genius have perished; some considerable ruins still preserve the fame of his taffe and munificence: modern travellers have measured the remains of the stadium which he constructed at Athens. It was fix hundred feet in length, built entirely of white marble, capable of admitting the whole body of the people, and finished in four years, whilst Herod was president of the Athenian games. To the memory of his wife Regilla, he dedicated a theatre, fcarcely to be paralleled in the empire: no wood except cedar, very curioully carved, was employed in any part of the building. The Odeum, defigned by Pericles for musical performances, and the rehearfal of new tragedies, had been a trophy of the victory of the arts over Barbaric greatness; as the timbers employed in the construction consisted chiefly of the masts of the Persian vessels. Notwithstand-

⁶⁹ Aulus Gellius, in Noct, Attic. i. 2. ix. 2. xviii. 10. xix. 12. Philostrat. p. 564.

ing the repairs bestowed on that ancient edifice CHAP. by a king of Cappadocia, it was again fallen to decay. Herod restored its ancient beauty and magnificence. Nor was the liberality of that illustrious citizen confined to the walls of Athens. The most splendid ornaments bestowed on the temple of Neptune in the Ishmus, a theatre at Corinth, a stadium at Delphi, a bath at Thermopylæ, and an aqueduct at Canufium in Italy, were insufficient to exhaust his treasures. The people of Epirus, Theffaly, Eubœa, Bœotia, and Peloponnesus, experienced his favours; and many inscriptions of the cities of Greece and Asia gratefully style Herodes Atticus their patron and benefactor 70.

In the commonwealths of Athens and Rome, Most of the modest simplicity of private houses announced the kothe equal condition of freedom; whilst the fo-numents for pubvereignty of the people was represented in the lic use; majestic edifices destined to the public use 71; nor temples, theatres, was this republican spirit totally extinguished by aqueducts, the introduction of wealth and monarchy. It &c. was in works of national honour and benefit, that the most virtuous of the emperors affected to difplay their magnificence. The golden palace of Nero excited a just indignation, but the vast extent of ground which had been usurped by his felfish luxury, was more nobly filled under the

70 See Philostrat. I. ii. p. 548. 560. Pausanias, I. i. and vii. 10. The life of Herodes, in the xxxth volume of the Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions.

71 It is particularly remarked of Athens by Dicæarchus, de Statu Græciæ, p. 8. inter Geographos Minores, edit. Hudson.

dinonal

fucceed-

CHAP.

fucceeding reigns by the Colifeum, the baths of Titus, the Claudian portico, and the temples dedicated to the goddess of Peace, and to the genius of Rome 72. These monuments of architecture, the property of the Roman people, were adorned with the most beautiful productions of Grecian painting and sculpture; and in the temple of Peace, a very curious library was open to the curiosity of the learned. At a small distance from thence was situated the Forum of Trajan. It was furrounded with a lofty portico, in the form of a quadrangle, into which four triumphal arches opened a noble and spacious entrance: in the centre arose a column of marble, whose height, of one hundred and ten feet, denoted the elevation of the hill that had been cut away. This column, which still subsists in its ancient beauty, exhibited an exact representation of the Dacian victories of its founder. The veteran foldier contemplated the story of his own campaigns, and by an easy illusion of national vanity, the peaceful citizen affociated himfelf to the honours of the triumph. All the other quarters of the capital, and all the provinces of the empire, were embellished by the same liberal spirit of public magnificence, and were filled with amphitheatres, theatres, temples, porticos, tri-

ושכבר בת-

⁷² Donatus de Roma Vetere, l. iii. c. 4, 5, 6. Nardini Roma Antica, l. iii. 11, 12, 13. and a MS. description of ancient Rome, by Bernardus Oricellarius, or Rucellai, of which I obtained a copy from the library of the Canon Ricardi at Florence. Two celebrated pictures of Timanthes and of Protogenes are mentioned by Pliny, as in the Temple of Peace; and the Laocoon was found in the baths of Titus,

umphal arches, baths, and aqueducts, all variously CHAP. conducive to the health, the devotion, and the pleasures of the meanest citizen. The last mentioned of those edifices deserve our peculiar attention. The boldness of the enterprise, the folidity of the execution, and the uses to which they were fubfervient, rank the aqueducts among the noblest monuments of Roman genius and power. The aqueducts of the capital claim a just pre-eminence; but the curious traveller, who, without the light of history, should examine those of Spoleto, of Metz, or of Segovia, would very naturally conclude, that those provincial towns had formerly been the residence of some potent monarch. The folitudes of Asia and Africa were once covered with flourishing cities, whose populousness, and even whose existence, was derived from fuch artificial supplies of a perennial stream of fresh water 73.

We have computed the inhabitants, and con- Number templated the public works, of the Roman em- and great-ness of the pire. The observation of the number and great-cities of the empire. ness of its cities will serve to confirm the former. and to multiply the latter. It may not be unpleasing to collect a few scattered instances relative to that subject, without forgetting, however, that from the vanity of nations and the poverty of language, the vague appellation of city has been indifferently bestowed on Rome and upon Laurentum. Ancient Italy is faid to have con- In Italy.

tained

⁷³ Montfaucon l'Antiquité Expliquée, tom. iv. p. 2. l. i. c. 9. Fabretti has composed a very learned treatise on the aqueducts of Rome.

CHAP. tained eleven hundred and ninety-seven cities \$ and for whatfoever æra of antiquity the expreffion might be intended 74; there is not any reason to believe the country less populous in the age of the Antonines, than in that of Romulus. The petry states of Latium were contained within the metropolis of the empire, by whose superior influence they had been attracted. Those parts of Italy which have so long languished under the lazy tyranny of priests and viceroys, had been afflicted only by the more tolerable calamities of war; and the first symptoms of decay, which they experienced, were amply compensated by the rapid improvements of the Cifalpine Gaul. The splendor of Verona may be traced in its remains: yet Verona was less celebrated than Aquileia or Padua, Milan or Ravenna. II. The spirit of improvement had passed the Alps, and been felt even in the woods of Britain, which were gradually cleared away to open a free space for convenient and elegant habitations. York was the feat of government; London was already enriched by commerce; and Bath was celebrated for the falutary effects of its medicinal waters. Gaul could boast of her twelve hundred cities 75; and though, in the northern parts, many of them, without excepting Paris itself, were little more than the rude and imperfect townships of a rising people; the fouthern provinces imitated the

Gaul and Spain.

. #20gue;

⁷⁴ Ælian. Hift. Var. l. ix. c. 16. He lived in the time of Alexander Severus. See Fabricius, Biblioth. Græca, l. iv. c. 21.

⁷⁵ Joseph. de Bell. Jud. ii. 16. The number, however, is mentioned, and should be received with a degree of latitude.

wealth and elegance of Italy 76. Many were the CHAP. cities of Gaul, Marseilles, Arles, Nismes, Narbonne, Thoulouse, Bourdeaux, Autun, Vienna, Lyons, Langres, and Treves, whose ancient condition might fustain an equal, and perhaps advantageous comparison with their present state. With regard to Spain, that country flourithed as a province, and has declined as a kingdom. Exhausted by the abuse of her strength, by America, and by fuperstition, her pride might possibly be confounded, if we required such a lift of three hundred and fixty cities, as Pliny has exhibited under the reign of Vespasian 77. Africa. III. Three hundred African cities had once acknowledged the authority of Carthage 78, nor is it likely that their numbers diminished under the administration of the emperors: Carthage itself rose with new splendor from its ashes; and that capital, as well as Capua and Corinth, foon recovered all the advantages which can be separated from independent fovereignty. IV. The pro- Afia. vinces of the east present the contrast of Roman magnificence with Turkish barbarism. ruins of antiquity scattered over uncultivated fields, and ascribed, by ignorance, to the power of magic, scarcely afford a shelter to the oppressed peasant or wandering Arab. Under the reign of the Cæfars, the proper Asia alone con-

76 Plin. Hift. Natur. iii. 5.

SnaA

tained

⁷⁷ Plin. Hist. Natur. iii. 3, 4. iv. 35. The list seems authentic and accurate: the division of the provinces, and the different condition of the cities, are minutely distinguished.

⁷⁸ Strabon, Geograph. 1. xvii. p. 1189.

CHAP. tained five hundred populous cities 79, enriched with all the gifts of nature, and adorned with all the refinements of art. Eleven cities of Alia had once disputed the honour of dedicating a temple to Tiberius, and their respective merits were examined by the fenate 80. Four of them were immediately rejected as unequal to the burden; and among these was Laodicea, whose splendor is still displayed in its ruins ". Laodicea collected a very considerable revenue from its flocks of sheep, celebrated for the fineness of their wool, and had received, a little before the contest, a legacy of above four hundred thousand pounds by the testament of a generous citizen 82. If such was the poverty of Laodicea, what must have been the wealth of those cities, whose claim appeared preferable, and particularly of Pergamus, of Smyrna, and of Ephefus, who fo long difputed with each other the titular primacy of

> 79 Joseph. de Bell. Jud. ii. 16. Philostrat, in Vit. Sophist, 1. ii. p. 548. Edit. Olear.

> 80 Tacit. Annal. iv. 55. I have taken some pains in consulting and comparing modern travellers, with regard to the sate of those eleven cities of Afia; seven or eight are totally destroyed, Hypæpe, Trailes, Laodicea, Ilium, Halicarnassus, Miletus, Ephesus, and we may add Sardes. Of the remaining three, Pergamus is a straggling village of two or three thouland inhabitants : Magnefia, under the name of Guzel-hiffar, a town of some consequence; and Smyrna, a great city, peopled by an hundred thousand souls. But even at Smyrna, while the Franks have maintained commerce, the Turks have ruined the arts.

> 81 See a very exact and pleasing description of the ruins of Laodicea, in Chandler's Travels through Afia Minor, p. 225, &c.

82 Strabo, l. xii. p. 866. He had studied at Tralles.

benier.

I

X

Afia 83 The capitals of Syria and Egypt held a C HAP. still superior rank in the empire: Antioch and Alexandria looked down with difdain on a crowd of dependent cities 84, and yielded, with reluctance, to the majesty of Rome itself.

All these cities were connected with each other, Roman and with the capital, by the public highways, which issuing from the Forum of Rome, traversed Italy, pervaded the provinces, and were terminated only by the frontiers of the empire. If we carefully trace the distance from the wall of Antoninus to Rome, and from thence to Jerusalem, it will be found that the great chain of communication, from the north-west to the south-east point of the empire, was drawn out to the length of four thousand and eighty Roman miles 85. The public roads were accurately divided by mile-stones, and ran in a direct line from one

⁸³ See a Differtation of M. de Boze, Mem. de l'Academie, tom: xviii. Aristides pronounced an oration which is still extant, to recommend concord to the rival cities.

⁸⁴ The inhabitants of Egypt, exclusive of Alexandria, amounted to seven millions and a half (Joseph. de Bell. Jud. ii. 16.) Under the military government of the Mamalukes, Syria was supposed to contain fixty thousand villages (Histoire de Timur Bec, l. v. c. 20.).

⁸⁵ The following Itinerary may serve to convey some idea of the direction of the road, and of the distance between the principal towns. I. From the wall of Antoninus to York, 222 Roman miles. II. London 227. III. Rhutupiæ or Sandwich 67. IV. The navigation to Boulogne 45. V. Rheims 174. VI. Lyons 330. VII. Milan 324. VIII. Rome 426. IX. Brundusium 360. X. The navigation to Dyrrachium 40. XI. Byzantium 711. XII. Ancyra 283. XIII. Tarfus 301. XIV. Antioch 141. XV. Tyre 252. XVI. Jerusalem 168. In all 4080 Roman, or 3740 English miles. See the Itineraries published by Wesseling, his annotations; Gale and Stukeley for Britain, and M. d'Anville for Gaul and Italy.

CHAP. city to another, with very little respect for the. obstacles either of nature or private property. Mountains were perforated, and bold arches. thrown over the broadest and most rapid streams 86. The middle part of the road was raifed into a terrace which commanded the adjacent country, confifted of feveral strata of fand, gravel, and cement, and was paved with large stones, or in fome places, near the capital, with granite 87. Such was the folid construction of the Roman highways, whose firmness has not entirely yielded to the effort of fifteen centuries. They united the subjects of the most distant provinces by an easy and familiar intercourse; but their primary object had been to facilitate the marches of the legions; nor was any country confidered as completely fubdued, till it had been rendered, in all its parts, pervious to the arms and authority of the conqueror. The advantage of receiving the earliest intelligence, and of conveying their orders with celerity, induced the emperors to establish, throughout their extensive dominions, the regular inflitution of posts 88. Houses were every where erected at the distance only of five or fix miles; each of them was constantly provided with forty horses, and by the help of these relays, it was easy to travel an hundred

Pofts.

⁸⁶ Montfaucon, l'Antiquité Expliquée, (tom. iv. p. 2. l. i. c. 5.) has described the bridges of Narni, Alcantara, Nismes, &c.

⁸⁷ Bergier Histoire des grands Chemins de l'Empire Romain, 1. ii. c. 1-28.

⁸⁸ Procopius in Hist. Arcana, c. 30. Bergier Hist. des grands Chemins, 1. iv. Codex Theodosian. 1. viii. tit. v. vol. ii. p. 506-563. with Godefroy's learned commentary.

miles in a day along the Roman roads 89. The CHAP. use of the posts was allowed to those who claimed it by an Imperial mandate; but though originally intended for the public fervice, it was fometimes indulged to the business or conveniency of private citizens 90. Nor was the com- Navigatimunication of the Roman empire less free and on. open by fea than it was by land. The provinces furrounded and inclosed the Mediterranean; and Italy, in the shape of an immense promontory, advanced into the midst of that great lake. The coasts of Italy are, in general, destitute of safe harbours; but human industry had corrected the deficiencies of nature; and the artificial port of Oftia, in particular, fituate at the mouth of the Tyber, and formed by the emperor Claudius, was an useful monument of Roman greatness 91. From this port, which was only fixteen miles from the capital, a favourable breeze frequently carried vessels in seven days to the columns of Hercules, and in nine or ten, to Alexandria in Egypt 92.

Whatever evils either reason or declamation Improvehave imputed to extensive empire, the power of agriculture

⁸⁹ In the time of Theodosius, Cæsarius, a magistrate of high rank, went post from Antioch to Constantinople. He began his journey at night, was in Cappadocia (165 miles from Antioch) the enfuing evening, and arrived at Conftantinople the fixth day about noon. The whole distance was 725 Roman, or 665 English miles. See Libanius Orat. xxii. and the Itineraria, p. 572-581.

⁹⁰ Pliny, though a favourite and a minister, made an apology for granting post-horses to his wife on the most urgent business. Epist. x.

⁹¹ Bergier Hist. des grands Chemins, 1. iv. c. 49.

⁹² Plin. Hift. Natur. xix. 1.

empire.

CHAP. Rome was attended with some beneficial conse quences to mankind; and the same freedom of intercourse which extended the vices, diffused tries of the likewise the improvements, of social life. In the more remote ages of antiquity, the world was unequally divided. The east was in the immemorial possession of arts and luxury; whilst the west was inhabited by rude and warlike barbarians, who either difdained agriculture, or to whom it was totally unknown. Under the protection of an established government, the productions of happier climates, and the industry of more civilized nations, were gradually introduced into the western countries of Europe; and the natives were encouraged, by an open and profitable commerce, to multiply the former, as well as to improve the latter. It would be almost impossible to enumerate all the articles, either of the animal or the vegetable reign, which were fuccessively imported into Europe, from Asia and Egypt 93; but it will not be unworthy of the dignity, and much less of the utility, of an historical work, flightly to touch on a few of the principal heads. 1. Almost all the flowers, the tion of fruits, &c. herbs, and the fruits, that grow in our European gardens, are of foreign extraction, which, in many cases, is betrayed even by their names: the apple was a native of Italy, and when the Romans had tasted the richer flavour of the apricot, the peach, the pomegranate, the citron, and the orange,

Introduc-

émoSI

010

⁹³ It is not improbable that the Greeks and Phænicians introduced fome new arts and productions into the neighbourhood of Marfeilles to die die die de la contrata and Gades.

they contented themselves with applying to all CHAP. these new fruits the common denomination of apple, discriminating them from each other by the additional epithet of their country. 2. In The vine. the time of Homer, the vine grew wild in the island of Sicily, and most probably in the adjacent continent; but it was not improved by the skill, nor did it afford a liquor grateful to the taste, of the savage inhabitants 94. A thousand years afterwards, Italy could boaft, that of the fourscore most generous and celebrated wines, more than two-thirds were produced from her foil 95. The bleffing was foon communicated to the Narbonnese province of Gaul; but so intense was the cold to the north of the Cevennes, that, in the time of Strabo, it was thought impossible to ripen the grapes in those parts of Gaul 96. This difficulty, however, was gradually vanquished; and there is some reason to believe, that the vineyards of Burgundy are as old as the age of the Antonines 97. 3. The olive, in the western The olive. world, followed the progress of peace, of which it was considered as the symbol. Two centuries after the foundation of Rome, both Italy and Africa were strangers to that useful plant; it was

⁹⁴ See Homer Odyff. 1. ix. v. 358.

⁹⁵ Plin. Hift. Natur, l. xiv.

⁹⁶ Strab. Geograph. 1. iv. p. 223. The intense cold of a Gallic winter was almost proverbial among the ancients.

⁹⁷ In the beginning of the ivth century, the orator Eumenius (Panegyric. Veter. viii. 6. edit. Delphin.) speaks of the vines in the erritory of Autun, which were decayed through age, and the first plantation of which was totally unknown. The Pagus Arebrignus is supposed by M. d'Anville to be the district of Beaune, celebrated, even at present, for one of the first growths of Burgundy.

Flax.

Artificial grass.

General plenty.

C HAP. naturalized in those countries; and at length carried into the heart of Spain and Gaul. The timid errors of the ancients, that it required a certain degree of heat, and could only flourish in the neighbourhood of the fea, were infenfibly exploded by industry and experience 98. 4. The cultivation of flax was transported from Egypt to Gaul, and enriched the whole country, however it might impoverish the particular lands on which it was fown 99. 5. The use of artificial graffes became familiar to the farmers both of Italy and the provinces, particularly the Lucerne, which derived its name and origin from Media 100. The affured fupply of wholesome and plentiful food for the cattle during winter, multiplied the number of the flocks and herds, which in their turn contributed to the fertility of the foil. To all these improvements may be added an assiduous attention to mines and fisheries, which, by employing a multitude of laborious hands, ferve to increase the pleasures of the rich, and the subfiftence of the poor. The elegant treatife of Columella describes the advanced state of the Spanish husbandry, under the reign of Tiberius; and it may be observed, that those famines which fo frequently afflicted the infant republic, were feldom or never experienced by the extensive empire of Rome. The accidental fcarcity, in any fingle province, was immediately relieved by the plenty of its more fortunate neighbours,

⁹⁸ Plin, Hift. Natur. 1. xv.

⁹⁹ Plin. Hift. Natur. 1, xix.

¹⁰⁰ See the agreeable Effays on Agriculture by Mr. Harte, in which he has collected all that the ancients and moderns have faid of lucerne.

Agriculture is the foundation of manufactures; CHAP. fince the productions of nature are the materials of art. Under the Roman empire, the labour of Arts of luxury. an industrious and ingenious people was variously, but incessantly employed, in the service of the rich. In their dress, their table, their houses. and their furniture, the favourites of fortune united every refinement of conveniency, of elegance, and of splendour; whatever could sooth their pride, or gratify their fenfuality. refinements, under the odious name of luxury, have been feverely arraigned by the moralists of every age; and it might perhaps be more conducive to the virtue, as well as happiness, of mankind, if all possessed the necessaries, and none the superfluities, of life. But in the present imperfect condition of fociety, luxury, though it may proceed from vice or folly, feems to be the only means that can correct the unequal distribution of property. The diligent mechanic, and the skilful artist, who have obtained no share in the division of the earth, receive a voluntary tax from the possessors of land; and the latter are prompted, by a fense of interest, to improve those estates, with whose produce they may purchase additional pleasures. This operation, the particular effects of which are felt in every fociety, acted with much more diffusive energy in the Roman world. The provinces would foon have been exhausted of their wealth, if the manufactures and commerce of luxury had not infenfibly restored to the industrious subjects, the sums which

G 4

CHAP.

were exacted from them by the arms and authority of Rome. As long as the circulation was confined within the bounds of the empire, it impressed the political machine with a new degree of activity, and its consequences, sometimes beneficial, could never become pernicious.

Foreign trade,

But it is no easy task to confine luxury within the limits of an empire. The most remote countries of the ancient world were ransacked to fupply the pomp and delicacy of Rome. The forest of Scythia afforded some valuable furs. Amber was brought over land from the shores of the Baltic to the Danube; and the barbarians were aftonished at the price which they received in exchange for fo useless a commodity 101. There was a confiderable demand for Babylonian carpets, and other manufactures of the East; but the most important and unpopular branch of foreign trade was carried on with Arabia and India. Every year, about the time of the fummer folftice, a fleet of an hundred and twenty vessels failed from Myos-hormos, a port of Egypt, on the Red Sea. By the periodical affiftance of the Monsoons, they traversed the ocean in about forty days. The coast of Malabar, or the island of Ceylon 102, was the usual term of their navigation, and it was in those markets that the

latter observed, with some humour, that even fashion had not yet found out the use of amber. Nero sent a Roman knight, to purchase great quantities on the spot, where it was produced; the coast of modern Prussa.

Arabs. It was discovered under the reign of Claudius, and gragually became the principal mart of the East.

mere

merchants from the more remote countries of CHAP. Asia expected their arrival. The return of the fleet of Egypt was fixed to the months of December or January; and as foon as their rich cargo had been transported on the backs of camels, from the Red Sea to the Nile, and had descended that river as far as Alexandria, it was poured, without delay, into the capital of the empire 103. The objects of oriental traffic were fplendid and trifling: filk, a pound of which was esteemed not inferior in value to a pound of gold 104; precious stones, among which the pearl elaimed the first rank after the diamond 105; and a variety of aromatics, that were confumed in religious worship and the pomp of funerals. The labour and risk of the voyage was rewarded with almost incredible profit; but the profit was made upon Roman subjects, and a few individuals were enriched at the expence of the Public. As the natives of Arabia and India were Gold and contented with the productions and manufactures filver. of their own country, filver, on the fide of the Romans, was the principal, if not the only instrument of commerce. It was a complaint worthy of the gravity of the senate, that, in the purchase of female ornaments, the wealth of the state

¹⁰³ Plin. Hift. Natur. 1. vi. Strabo, 1. xvii.

¹⁰⁴ Hist. August. p. 224. A filk garment was considered as an ornament to a woman, but as a difgrace to a man.

¹⁰⁵ The two great pearl fisheries were the same as at present, Ormuz and Cape Comorin. As well as we can compare ancient with modern geography, Rome was supplied with diamonds from the mine of Jumelpur, in Bengal, which is described in the Voyages de Tayernier, tom. ii. p. 281.

C HAP. was irrecoverably given away to foreign and hoftile nations 106. The annual loss is computed, by a writer of an inquisitive but censorious temper, at upwards of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling 107. Such was the style of difcontent, brooding over the dark prospect of approaching poverty. And yet, if we compare the proportion between gold and filver, as it stood in the time of Pliny, and as it was fixed in the reign of Constantine, we shall discover within that period a very considerable increase 108. There is not the least reason to suppose that gold was become more scarce; it is therefore evident that filver was grown more common; that whatever might be the amount of the Indian and Arabian exports, they were far from exhausting the wealth of the Roman world; and that the produce of the mines abundantly supplied the demands of commerce. pagagine said de badalina man alagib

General felicity.

Notwithstanding the propensity of mankind to exalt the past, and to depreciate the present, the tranquil and prosperous state of the empire was warmly felt, and honestly confessed, by the provincials as well as Romans. "They acknow-" ledged that the true principles of focial life, " laws, agriculture, and science, which had been first invented by the wisdom of Athens, were " now firmly established by the power of Rome,

106 Tacit. Annal. iii. 52. In a speech of Tiberius.

107 Plin. Hift. Natur. xii. 18. In another place he computes half that fum; Quingenties H. S. for India exclusive of Arabia.

108 The proportion which was 1 to 10, and 121, rose to 142, the legal regulation of Constantine. See Arbuthnot's Tables of ancient Coins, c. v.

« under

" under whose auspicious influence, the fiercest CHAP " barbarians were united by an equal govern-" ment and common language. They affirm, that with the improvement of arts, the human of species was visibly multiplied. They cele-" brate the increasing fplendour of the cities, " the beautiful face of the country, cultivated " and adorned like an immense garden; and the " long festival of peace, which was enjoyed by " fo many nations, forgetful of their ancient " animolities, and delivered from the apprehen-" fion of future danger 109." Whatever fufpicions may be fuggefted by the air of rhetoric and declamation, which feems to prevail in thefe passages, the substance of them is perfectly agreeable to historic truth.

poraries should discover in the public selicity the latent causes of decay and corruption. This long peace, and the uniform government of the Romans, introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, the fire of genius was extinguished, and even the military spirit evaporated. The natives of Europe were brave and robust, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Illyricum, supplied the legions with excellent soldiers, and constituted the real strength

It was fearcely possible that the eyes of contem- Decline of

109 Among many other passages, see Pliny (Hist. Natur. iii. 5.), Aristides (de Urbe Româ), and Tertullian (de Animâ, c. 30.).

of the monarchy. Their personal valour remained, but they no longer possessed that public courage which is nourished by the love of indepen-

dence,

CHAP, dence, the fense of national honour, the presence of danger, and the habit of command. They received laws and governors from the will of their fovereign, and trufted for their defence to a mercenary army. The posterity of their boldest leaders was contented with the rank of citizens and subjects. The most aspiring spirits resorted to the court or standard of the emperors; and the deferted provinces, deprived of political strength or union, infensibly funk into the languid indifference of private life.

of genius.

The love of letters, almost inseparable from peace and refinement, was fashionable among the fubjects of Hadrian and the Antonines, who were themselves men of learning and curiosity. It was diffused over the whole extent of their empire; the most northern tribes of Britons had acquired a tafte for rhetoric; Homer as well as Virgil were transcribed and studied on the banks of the Rhine and Danube; and the most liberal rewards fought out the faintest glimmerings of literar merit 110. The sciences of physic and astronomy

110 Herodes Atticus gave the fophist Polemo above eight thoufand pounds for three declamations. See Philostrat. l. i. p. 558. The Antonines founded a school at Athens, in which professors of grammar, rhetoric, politics, and the four great fects of philosophy, were maintained at the public expence for the instruction of youth. The falary of a philosopher was ten thousand drachmæ, between three and four hundred pounds a year. Similar establishments were formed in the other great cities of the empire. See Lucian in Eunuch. tom. ii. p. 353. edit. Reitz. Philostrat. 1. ii. p. 566. Hift. August. p. 21. Dion Cassius, l. lxxi. p. 1195. Juvenal himself, in a morose satire, which in every line betrays his own disappointment and envy, is obliged, however, to fay,

O Juvenes, circumspicit et agitat vos. Materiamque fibi Ducis indulgentia quærit.

Satir, vii. 20.

were fuccessfully cultivated by the Greeks; the CHAP. observations of Ptolemy and the writings of Galen are studied by those who have improved their discoveries and corrected their errors; but if we except the inimitable Lucian, this age of indolence passed away without having produced a single writer of original genius, or who excelled in the arts of elegant composition. The authority of Plato and Aristotle, of Zeno and Epicurus, still reigned in the schools; and their systems, transmitted with blind deference from one generation of disciples to another, precluded every generous attempt to exercise the powers, or enlarge the limits, of the human mind. The beauties of the poets and orators, instead of kindling a fire like their own, inspired only cold and fervile imitations: or if any ventured to deviate from those models, they deviated at the same time from good fense and propriety. On the revival of letters, the youthful vigour of the imagination, after a long repose, national emulation, a new religion, new languages, and a new world, called forth the genius of Europe. But the provincials of Rome, trained by a uniform artificial foreign education, were engaged in a very unequal competition with those bold ancients, who, by expressing their genuine feelings in their native tongue, had already occupied every place of honour. The name of Poet was almost forgotten; that of Orator was usurped by the fophists. A cloud of critics, of compilers, of commentators, darkened the face of learning, and the decline of genius was foon followed by the corruption of tafte.

Degeneracy.

The fublime Longinus, who in somewhat a later period, and in the court of a Syrian queen, preserved the spirit of ancient Athens, observes and laments this degeneracy of his contemporaries, which debased their sentiments, enervated their courage, and depressed their talents. "In " the same manner, says he, as some children " always remain pigmies, whose infant limbs " have been too closely confined; thus our ten-" der minds, fettered by the prejudices and ha-" bits of a just servitude, are unable to expand st themselves, or to attain that well-proportioned " greatness which we admire in the ancients; " who living under a popular government, wrote with the same freedom as they acted "." This diminutive stature of mankind, if we purfue the metaphor, was daily finking below the old flandard, and the Roman world was indeed peopled by a race of pygmies; when the fierce giants of the north broke in, and mended the puny breed. They restored a manly spirit of freedom; and after the revolution of ten centuries, freedom became the happy parent of taste and science.

Longin de Sublim. c. 43. p. 229. edit. Toll. Here too we may say of Longinus, "his own example strengthens all his laws." Instead of proposing his sentiments with a manly boldness, he instruutes them with the most guarded caution, puts them into the mouth of a friend; and, as far as we can collect from a corrupted text, makes a shew of refuting them himself.

A elication characters to removely the converge.

torn, converged the case, of learning, and elected.

come of granters are to me followed breaks corrupt

.30 :30 0 0 0 0

QUAT outing by the darrow; of the fenage. If he call-

to be tros C HOA P. III. To be to the

ar quetos mas an the herdred about 400 recessories

the pentoness of the stantitudent randitudieth Of the Constitution of the Roman Empire, in the Age of the Antonines.

the decree of Lange, there whered alone tody had

HE obvious definition of a monarchy feems CHAP. 1 to be that of a state, in which a single perfon, by whatfoever name he may be diftinguish. Idea of a ed, is intrusted with the execution of the laws, the management of the revenue, and the command of the army. But, unless public liberty is protected by intrepid and vigilant guardians, the authority of fo formidable a magistrate will foon degenerate into despotism. The influence of the clergy, in an age of superstition, might be usefully employed to affert the rights of mankind; but fo intimate is the connexion between the throne and the altar, that the banner of the church has very feldom been feen on the fide of the people. A martial nobility and stubborn commons, possessed of arms, tenacious of property, and collected into constitutional assemblies, form the only balance capable of preserving a free constitution against enterprises of an aspiring prince.

Every barrier of the Roman constitution had Situation been levelled by the vast ambition of the dic- tus. tator; every fence had been extirpated by the cruel hand of the Triumvir. After the victory of Actium, the fate of the Roman world depended on the will of Octavianus, furnamed Cæfar, by his uncle's adoption, and afterwards Au-

monarchy.

of Augus-

gustus, by the flattery of the senate. The conqueror was at the head of forty-four veteran legions', conscious of their own strength, and of the weakness of the constitution, habituated, during twenty years civil war, to every act of blood and violence, and passionately devoted to the house of Cæsar, from whence alone they had received, and expected, the most lavish rewards. The provinces, long oppressed by the ministers of the republic, fighed for the government of a fingle person, who would be the master, not the accomplice, of those petty tyrants. The people of Rome, viewing, with a fecret pleafure, the humiliation of the aristocracy, demanded only bread and public shows; and were supplied with both by the liberal hand of Augustus. The rich and polite Italians, who had almost universally embraced the philosophy of Epicurus, enjoyed the present bleffings of ease and tranquillity, and fuffered not the pleafing dream to be interrupted by the memory of their old tumultuous freedom. With its power, the senate had lost its dignity; many of the most noble families were extinct. The republicans of spirit and ability had perished in the field of battle, or in the proscription. The door of the affembly had been defignedly left open, for a mixed multitude of more than a thousand persons, who reflected disgrace upon their rank, instead of deriving honour from it 2.

t

C

C

li

W

li

re

al

n

hi

Se

CE

ho

fte

of

tu

po

pa wl

an

**

25

tt

**

Orofius, vi. 18.

Iulius Cæfar introduced foldiers, strangers, and half-barbarians, into the senate (Sueton. in Cæsar. c. 77, 80.). The abuse became Rill more scandalous after his death, The transfer adopters, and water

The reformation of the senate, was one of the CHAP. first steps in which Augustus laid aside the tyrant, and professed himself the father of his forms the country. He was elected censor; and, in con-fenate, cert with his faithful Agrippa, he examined the lift of the fenators, expelled a few members, whose vices or whose obstinacy required a public example, perfuaded near two hundred to prevent the shame of an expulsion by a voluntary retreat, raised the qualification of a senator to about ten thousand pounds, created a sufficient number of Patrician families, and accepted for himself, the honourable title of Prince of the Senate, which had always been bestowed, by the censors, on the citizen the most eminent for his honours and fervices 3. But whilft he thus reflored the dignity, he destroyed the independence of the fenate. The principles of a free constitution are irrecoverably loft, when the legislative power is nominated by the executive.

Before an affembly thus modelled and pre- Refigns pared, Augustus pronounced a studied oration, his usurpaded power. which displayed his patriotisin, and disguised his ambition. "He lamented, yet excused, his past conduct. Filial piety had required at his " hands the revenge of his father's murder; the " humanity of his own nature had fometimes e given way to the stern laws of necessity, and to a forced connexion with two unworthy col-" leagues: as long as Antony lived, the repub-

³ Dion Cassius, I. iii. p. 693. Suetonius in August. c. 55.

CHAP. " lic forbad him to abandon her to a degenerate " Roman, and a barbarian queen. He was now " at liberty to fatisfy his duty and his inclina-" tion. He folemnly restored the senate and " people to all their ancient rights; and wished " only to mingle with the crowd of his fellow-" citizens, and to share the bleffings which he

" had obtained for his country "."

Is prevailed upon to resume it under the title of Emperor or General.

It would require the pen of Tacitus (if Tacitus had affifted at this affembly) to describe the various emotions of the senate; those that were suppressed, and those that were affected. It was dangerous to trust the sincerity of Augustus; to feem to distrust it, was still more dangerous. The respective advantages of monarchy and a republic have often divided speculative inquirers; the present greatness of the Roman state, the corruption of manners, and the licence of the foldiers, fupplied new arguments to the advocates of monarchy; and these general views of government were again warped by the hopes and fears of each individual. Amidst this confusion of fentiments, the answer of the senate was unanimous and decisive. They refused to accept the refignation of Augustus; they conjured him not to defert the republic, which he had faved. After a decent refistance, the crafty tyrant submitted to the orders of the fenate; and confented to receive the government of the provinces,

⁴ Dion (l. liii. p. 698.) gives us a prolix and bombast speech on this great occasion. I have borrowed from Suctonius and Tacitus the general language of Augustus.

and the general command of the Roman armies, CHAP. under the well-known names of Proconsul and IMPERATOR 5. But he would receive them only for ten years. Even before the expiration of that period, he hoped that the wounds of civil difcord would be completely healed, and that the republic, restored to its pristine health and vigour, would no longer require the dangerous interpolition of fo extraordinary a magistrate. The memory of this comedy, repeated feveral times during the life of Augustus, was preserved to the last ages of the empire, by the peculiar pomp with which the perpetual monarchs of Rome always folemnized the tenth years of their reign 6.

Without any violation of the principles of the Power of constitution, the general of the Roman armies generals. might receive and exercise an authority almost despotic over the foldiers, the enemies, and the fubjects of the republic. With regard to the foldiers, the jealoufy of freedom had, even from the earliest ages of Rome, given way to the hopes of conquest, and a just sense of military discipline. The dictator, or conful, had a right to command the fervice of the Roman youth; and to punish an obstinate or cowardly disobedience by the most severe and ignominious pe-

the Roman

⁵ Imperator (from which we have derived Emperor) fignified under the republic no more than general, and was emphatically bestowed by the foldiers, when on the field of battle they proclaimed their victorious leader worthy of that title. When the Roman emperors affumed it in that sense, they placed it after their name, and marked how often they had taken it.

⁶ Dion, 1. liii. p. 703, &c.

CHAP. nalties, by striking the offender out of the lift of citizens, by confifcating his property, and by felling his person into slavery 7. The most sacred rights of freedom, confirmed by the Porcian and Sempronian laws, were suspended by the military engagement. In his camp the general exercifed an absolute power of life and death; his jurisdiction was not confined by any forms of trial, or rules of proceeding, and the execution of the fentence was immediate and without appeal . The choice of the enemies of Rome was regularly decided by the legislative authority. The most important resolutions of peace and war were feriously debated in the fenate, and folemnly ratified by the people. But when the arms of the legions were carried to a great distance from Italy, the generals affumed the liberty of directing them against whatever people, and in whatever manner, they judged most advantageous for the public service. It was from the success, not from the justice, of their enterprises, that they expected the honours of a triumph. In the use of victory, especially after they were no longer controlled by the commissioners of the senate, they exercised the most unbounded despotism. When Pompey commanded in the east, he rewarded his foldiers and allies, dethroned princes,

7 Livy Epitom. 1. xiv. Valer. Maxim. vi. 3.

⁸ See in the viiith book of Livy, the conduct of Manlius Torquatus and Papirius Cursor. They violated the laws of nature and humanity, but they afferted those of military discipline; and the people, who abhorred the action, was obliged to respect the principle.

divided kingdoms, founded colonies, and diffri- CHAP. buted the treasures of Mithridates. On his return to Rome, he obtained, by a fingle act of the senate and people, the universal ratification of all his proceedings?. Such was the power over the foldiers, and over the enemies of Rome. which was either granted to, or assumed by, the generals of the republic. They were, at the fame time, the governors, or rather monarche, of the conquered provinces, united the civil with the military character, administered justice as well as the finances, and exercised both the executive and legislative power of the state.

From what has been already observed in the Lieutefirst chapter of this work, some notion may be the empeformed of the armies and provinces thus intrust- ror. ed to the ruling hand of Augustus. But as it was impossible that he could personally command the legions of fo many distant frontiers, he was indulged by the fenate, as Pompey had already been, in the permission of devolving the execution of his great office on a sufficient number of lieutenants. In rank and authority these officers seemed not inferior to the ancient proconfuls; but their station was dependent and precarious. They received and held their commissions at

9 By the lavish but unconstrained suffrages of the people, Pompey had obtained a military command scarcely inferior to that of Augustus. Among the extraordinary acts of power executed by the former, we may remark the foundation of twenty-nine cities, and the distribution of three or four millions sterling to his troops. The ratification of his acts met with some opposition and delays in the fenate. See Plutarch, Appian, Dion Cassius, and the first book of the epiftles to Atticus.

H 3

the

GHAP. III. the will of a superior, to whose auspicious influence the merit of their action was legally attributed . They were the representatives of the emperor. The emperor alone was the general of the republic, and his jurisdiction, civil as well as military, extended over all the conquests of Rome. It was some satisfaction, however, to the senate, that he always delegated his power to the members of their body. The Imperial lieutenants were of consular or præstorian dignity; the legions were commanded by senators, and the præsecture of Egypt was the only important trust committed to a Roman knight.

Division of the provinces between the emperor and the senate, Within fix days after Augustus had been compelled to accept so very liberal a grant, he resolved to gratify the pride of the senate by an easy facrifice. He represented to them, that they had enlarged his powers, even beyond that degree which might be required by the melancholy condition of the times. They had not permitted him to refuse the laborious command of the armies and the frontiers; but he must insist on being allowed to restore the more peaceful and secure provinces, to the mild administration of the civil magistrate. In the division of the provinces, Augustus provided for his own power,

To Under the commonwealth, a triumph could only be claimed by the general, who was authorised to take the Auspices in the name of the people. By an exact consequence drawn from this principle of policy and religion, the triumph was reserved to the emperor; and his most successful lieutenants were satisfied with some marks of distinction, which, under the name of triumphal honours, were invented in their sayour.

sda

and for the dignity of the republic. The pro- CHAP. confuls of the senate, particularly those of Asia, Greece, and Africa, enjoyed a more honourable character than the lieutenants of the emperor, who commanded in Gaul or Syria. The former were attended by lictors, the latter by foldiers. A law was passed, that wherever the emperor was present, his extraordinary commission should supersede the ordinary jurisdiction of the governor; a custom was introduced, that the new conquests belonged to the Imperial portion; and it was foon discovered, that the authority of the Prince, the favourite epithet of Augustus, was the same in every part of the empire.

In return for this imaginary concession, Au- The forgustus obtained an important privilege, which mer prerendered him master of Rome and Italy. By a military command, dangerous exception to the ancient maxims, he and guarda was authorized to preferve his military command, in Rome itself. supported by a numerous body of guards, even in time of peace, and in the heart of the capital. His command, indeed, was confined to those citizens who were engaged in the fervice by the military oath; but fuch was the propenfity of the Romans to fervitude, that the oath was voluntarily taken by the magistrates, the senators, and the equestrian order, till the homage of flattery was infensibly converted into an annual and solemn protestation of fidelity.

Although Augustus considered a military force Consular as the firmest foundation, he wisely rejected it, as and tribua very odious instrument of government. It was powers. more agreeable to his temper, as well as to his

CHAP.

policy, to reign under the venerable names of ancient magistracy, and artfully to collect, in his own person, all the scattered rays of civil jurisdiction. With this view, he permitted the fenate to confer upon him, for his life, the powers of the confular " and tribunitian offices 12, which were, in the fame manner, continued to all his fucceffors. The confuls had fucceeded to the kings of Rome, and represented the dignity of the state. They superintended the ceremonies of religion, levied and commanded the legions, gave audience to foreign ambaffadors, and prefided in the affemblies both of the fenate and people. The general control of the finances was intrusted to their care; and though they seldom had leifure to administer justice in person, they were considered as the supreme guardians of law, equity, and the public peace. Such was their ordinary jurisdiction; but whenever the senate empowered the first magistrate to consult the fafety of the commonwealth, he was raifed by that degree above the laws, and exercised, in the defence of liberty, a temporary despotism 13,

of Regia potestas: and Polybius (l. vi. c. 3.) observes three powers in the Roman constitution. The monarchical was represented and exercised by the Consuls.

¹² As the tribunitian power (distinct from the annual office) was first invented for the dictator Cæsar (Dion, l. xliv. p. 384.), we may easily conceive, that it was given as a reward for having so nobly afferted, by arms, the facred rights of the tribunes and people. See his own Commentaries, de Bell. Civil. 1. i.

Augustus exercised nine annual consulships without interruption. He then most artfully refused that magistracy as well as the dictator-

The character of the tribunes was, in every re- CHAP. spect, different from that of the confuls. The appearance of the former was modest and humble; but their persons were sacred and inviolable. Their force was fuited rather for opposition than for action. They were instituted to defend the oppressed, to pardon offences, to arraign the enemies of the people, and, when they judged it necessary, to stop, by a single word, the whole machine of government. As long as the republic subsisted, the dangerous influence, which either the conful or the tribune might derive from their respective jurisdiction, was diminished by feveral important restrictions. Their authority expired with the year in which they were elected; the former office was divided between two, the latter among ten persons; and, as both in their private and public interest they were averse to each other, their mutual conflicts contributed, for the most part, to strengthen rather than to destroy the balance of the constitution. when the confular and tribunitian powers were united, when they were vefted for life in a fingle person, when the general of the army was, at the same time, the minister of the senate and the representative of the Roman people, it was impossible to resist the exercise, nor was it easy to define the limits, of his Imperial prerogative.

dictatorship, absented himself from Rome, and waited till the fatal effects of tumult and faction forced the senate to invest him with a perpetual consulship. Augustus, as well as his successors, affected, however, to conceal so invidious a title.

CHAP.
III.
Imperial prerogatives.

To these accumulated honours, the policy of Augustus soon added the splendid as well as important dignities of supreme pontiff, and of cenfor. By the former he acquired the management of the religion, and by the latter a legal inspection over the manners and fortunes of the Roman people. If so many distinct and independent powers did not exactly unite with each other, the complaifance of the senate was prepared to fupply every deficiency by the most ample and extraordinary concessions. The emperors, as the first ministers of the republic, were exempted from the obligation and penalty of many inconvenient laws: they were authorized to convoke the fenate, to make feveral motions in the same day, to recommend candidates for the honours of the state, to enlarge the bounds of the city, to employ the revenue at their difcretion, to declare peace and war, to ratify treaties; and by a most comprehensive clause, they were empowered to execute whatfoever they should judge advantageous to the empire, and agreeable to the majesty of things private or public, human or divine 14.

The magistrates. When all the various powers of executive government were committed to the *Imperial magi*frate, the ordinary magistrates of the commonwealth languished in obscurity, without vigour, and almost without business. The names and

¹⁴ See a fragment of a Decree of the Senate, conferring on the emperor Vespasian, all the powers granted to his predecessors, Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius. This curious and important monument is published in Gruter's Inscriptions, No. ccxlii.

forms of the ancient administration were preserv- CHAP. ed by Augustus with the most anxious care. The usual number of consuls, prætors, and tribunes "5, were annually invested with their respective ensigns of office, and continued to discharge some of their least important functions. Those honours still attracted the vain ambition of the Romans; and the emperors themselves, though invested for life with the powers of the consulship, frequently aspired to the title of that annual dignity, which they condescended to share with the most illustrious of their fellowcitizens .. In the election of these magistrates, the people, during the reign of Augustus, were permitted to expose all the inconveniences of a wild democracy. That artful prince, instead of discovering the least symptom of impatience, humbly folicited their fuffrages for himfelf or his friends, and scrupulously practised all the duties

¹⁵ Two confuls were created on the Calends of January; but in the course of the year others were substituted in their places, till the annual number seems to have amounted to no less than twelve. The prætors were usually fixteen or eighteen (Lipfius in Excurs. D. ad Tacit. Annal. l. i.). I have not mentioned the Ædiles or Quæftors. Officers of the police or revenue eafily adapt themselves to any form of government. In the time of Nero, the tribunes legally possessed the right of intercession, though it might be dangerous to exercise it (Tacit. Annal. xvi. 26.). In the time of Trajan, it was doubtful whether the tribuneship was an office or a name (Plin. Epist. i. 23.).

¹⁶ The tyrants themselves were ambitious of the consulship. The virtuous princes were moderate in the purfuit, and exact in the difcharge of it. Trajan revived the ancient oath, and swore before the conful's tribunal, that he would observe the laws (Plin. Panegyric

ture to ascribe to his councils, the first measure of the succeeding reign, by which the elections were transferred to the senate 18. The assemblies of the people were for ever abolished, and the emperors were delivered from a dangerous multitude, who, without restoring liberty, might have disturbed, and perhaps endangered, the

established government.

The fe-

By declaring themselves the protectors of the people, Marius and Cæfar had subverted the constitution of their country. But as soon as the fenate had been humbled and difarmed, fuch an affembly, confifting of five or fix hundred perfons, was found a much more tractable and useful instrument of dominion. It was on the dignity of the fenate, that Augustus and his succeffors founded their new empire; and they affected, on every occasion, to adopt the language and principles of Patricians. In the administration of their own powers, they frequently confulted the great national council, and feemed to refer to its decision the most important concerns of peace and war. Rome, Italy, and the internal provinces were subject to the immediate jurisdiction of the senate. With regard to civil ob-

jects,

Quoties Magistratuum Comițiis interesset. Tribus cum candidatis suis circuibat: supplicabatque more solemni. Ferebat et ipse suffragium in tribubus, ut unus e populo. Suetonius in August, c. 56.

Annal. i. 15. The word primum feems to allude to some faint and unsuccessful efforts, which were made towards restoring them to the people.

jects, it was the supreme court of appeal; with CHAP. regard to criminal matters, a tribunal, conftituted for the trial of all offences that were committed by men in any public station, or that affected the peace and majesty of the Roman people. exercise of the judicial power became the most frequent and ferious occupation of the fenate; and the important causes that were pleaded before them, afforded a last refuge to the spirit of ancient eloquence. As a council of state, and as a court of justice, the senate possessed very considerable prerogatives; but in its legislative capacity, in which it was supposed virtually to represent the people, the rights of sovereignty were acknowledged to relide in that affembly. Every power was derived from their authority. every law was ratified by their fanction. Their regular meetings were held on three stated days in every month, the Calends, the Nones, and the Ides. The debates were conducted with decent freedom; and the emperors themselves, who gloried in the name of fenators, fat, voted, and divided with their equals.

To refume, in a few words, the system of the General Imperial government; as it was instituted by idea of the Augustus, and maintained by those princes who system. understood their own interest and that of the people, it may be defined an absolute monarchy disguised by the forms of a commonwealth. The masters of the Roman world surrounded their throne with darkness, concealed their irrefiftible strength, and humbly professed themselves the

CHAP, the accountable ministers of the senate, whose fupreme decrees they dictated and obeyed 19.

Court of the emperors.

The face of the court corresponded with the forms of the administration. The emperors, if we except those tyrants whose capricious folly violated every law of nature and decency, difdained that pomp and ceremony which might offend their countrymen, but could add nothing to their real power. In all the offices of life, they affected to confound themselves with their fubjects, and maintained with them an equal intercourse of visits and entertainments. Their habit, their palace, their table, were fuited only to the rank of an opulent senator. Their family, however numerous or splendid, was composed entirely of their domestic slaves and freedmen 20. Augustus or Trajan would have blushed at employing the meanest of the Romans in those menial offices, which, in the household and bedchamber of a limited monarch, are so eagerly solicited by the proudest nobles of Britain.

partial sketch of the Imperial system. To illustrate and often to correct him, I have meditated Tacitus, examined Suetonius, and consulted the following moderns: the Abbé de la Bleterie, in the Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xix. xxi. xxiv. xxv xxvii. Beausort, Republique Romaine, tom. i. p. 235—275. The Differtations of Noodt and Gronovius, de lege Regia; printed at Leyden, in the year 1731. Gravina de Imperio Romano, p. 479—544. of his Opuscula. Massei Verona Illustrata, p. i. p. 245, &c.

ao A weak prince will always be governed by his domestics. The power of slaves aggravated the shame of the Romans; and the senate paid court to a Pallas or a Narcissus. There is a chance that a modern favourite may be a gentleman.

The deification of the emperors 22 is the only CHAP. instance in which they departed from their accustomed prudence and modesty. The Asiatic Deifica-Greeks were the first inventors, the successors of Alexander the first objects, of this servile and impious mode of adulation. It was eafily transferred from the kings to the governors of Afia; and the Roman magistrates very frequently were adored as provincial deities, with the pomp of altars and temples, of festivals and facrifices 22. It was natural that the emperors should not refuse what the proconfuls had accepted; and the divine honours which both the one and the other received from the provinces, attested rather the despotism than the servitude of Rome. But the conquerors foon imitated the vanquished nations in the arts of flattery; and the imperious spirit of the first Cæsar too easily consented to assume, during his life-time, a place among the tutelar deities of Rome. The milder temper of his fucceffor declined fo dangerous an ambition, which was never afterwards revived, except by the madness of Caligula and Domitian. Augustus permitted indeed fome of the provincial cities to erect temples to his honour, on condition that they should affociate the worship of Rome with that of the fovereign; he tolerated private super-

²¹ See a treatise of Vandale de Consecratione Principium. It would be easier for me to copy, than it has been to verify, the quotations of that learned Dutchman.

²² See a differtation of the Abbé Mongault in the first volume of the Academy of Inscriptions.

CHAP. stition, of which he might be the object 23; but he contented himself with being revered by the senate and people in his human character, and wifely left to his fuccessor, the care of his public deification. A regular custom was introduced. that on the decease of every emperor who had neither lived nor died like a tyrant, the senate by a folemn decree should place him in the number of the gods: and the ceremonies of his Apotheofis were blended with those of his funeral. This legal, and, as it should seem, injudicious profanation, so abhorrent to our stricter principles, was received with a very faint murmur 24, by the easy nature of Polytheism; but it was received as an institution, not of religion but of policy. We should difgrace the virtues of the Antonines, by comparing them with the vices of Hercules or Jupiter. Even the character of Cæfar or Augustus were far superior to those of the popular deities. But it was the misfortune of the former to live in an enlightened age. and their actions were too faithfully recorded to admit of fuch a mixture of fable and mystery, as the devotion of the vulgar requires. As foon as their divinity was established by law, it funk into oblivion, without contributing either to their own fame, or to the dignity of fucceeding princes.

100131.1

²³ Jurandasque tuum per nomen ponimus aras, says Horace to the emperor himself, and Horace was well acquainted with the court of

²⁴ See Cicero in Philippic. i. 6. Julian in Cæfaribus. Inque Deûm templis jurabit Roma per umbras, is the indignant expression of Lucan, but it is a patriotic, rather than a devout indignation.

In the consideration of the Imperial govern- CHAP. ment, we have frequently mentioned the artful founder, under his well-known title of Augustus, which was not however conferred upon him, till and Cafar. the edifice was almost completed. The obscure name of Octavianus, he derived from a mean family, in the little town of Aricia. It was stained with the blood of the profcription; and he was defirous, had it been possible, to erase all memory of his former life. The illustrious furname of Cæsar, he had assumed, as the adopted fon of the dictator; but he had too much good fense, either to hope to be confounded, or to wish to be compared, with that extraordinary man. It was proposed in the senate, to dignify their minister with a new appellation: and after a very ferious discussion, that of Augustus was chosen, among several others, as being the most expressive of the character of peace and fanctity, which he uniformly affected 25. Augustus was therefore a personal, Cæsar a family distinction. The former should naturally have expired with the prince on whom it was bestowed; and however the latter was diffused by adoption and female alliance, Nero was the last prince who could allege any hereditary claim to the honours of the Julian line. But, at the time of his death, the practice of a century had inseparably connected those appellations with the Imperial dignity, and they have been preserved by a long succession of

²⁵ Dion Cassius, l. lili. p. 710. with the curious Annotations of Reymar.

CHAP. emperors, Romans, Greeks, Franks, and Germans, from the fall of the republic to the prefent time. A distinction was, however, soon introduced. The facred title of Augustus was always referved for the monarch, whilst the name of Cæfar was more freely communicated to his relations; and, from the reign of Hadrian, at least, was appropriated to the second person in the state, who was considered as the presumptive heir of the empire.

Character

The tender respect of Augustus for a free conand policy of August stitution which he had destroyed, can only be explained by an attentive confideration of the character of that fubtle tyrant. A cool head, an unfeeling heart, and a cowardly disposition, prompted him, at the age of nineteen, to assume the mask of hypocrify, which he never afterwards faid aside. With the same hand, and probably with the same temper, he signed the proscription of Cicero, and the pardon of Cinna. His virtues, and even his vices, were artificial; and according to the various dictates of his interest, he was at first the enemy, and at last the father, of the Roman world 26. When he framed the artful system of the Imperial authority, his moderation was inspired by his fears. He wished to

deceive

²⁶ As Octavianus advanced to the banquet of the Cæfars, his colour changed like that of the Camelion; pale at first, then red, afterwards black, he at last assumed the mild livery of Venus and the graces (Cæsars, p. 309.). This image employed by Julian, in his ingenious fiction, is just and elegant; but when he considers this change of character as real, and ascribes it to the power of philosophy, he does too much honour to philosophy, and to Octavianus.

deceive the people by an image of civil liberty, CHAP. and the armies by an image of civil government.

liberty for

I. The death of Cæsar was ever before his Image of eyes. He had lavished wealth and honours on the people. his adherents; but the most favoured friends of his uncle were in the number of the conspirators. The fidelity of the legions might defend his authority against open rebellion; but their vigilance could not secure his person from the dagger of a determined republican; and the Romans, who revered the memory of Brutus 27, would applaud the imitation of his virtue. Cæfar had provoked his fate, as much by the oftentation of his power, as by his power itself. The conful or the tribune might have reigned in peace. The title of king had armed the Romans against his life. Augustus was sensible that mankind is governed by names; nor was he deceived in his expectation, that the fenate and people would fubmit to flavery, provided they were respectfully affured, that they still enjoyed their ancient freedom. A feeble senate and enervated people cheerfully acquiefced in the pleafing illusion, as long as it was supported by the virtue, or even by the prudence, of the fuccessors of Augustus. It was a motive of felf-prefervation, not a principle of liberty, that animated the conspirators against Caligula, Nero, and Domitian. They attacked

²⁷ Two centuries after the establishment of monarchy, the emperor Marcus Antoninus recommends the character of Brutus as a perfect model of Roman virtue.

Attempt of the fenate after the death of Caligu-

CHAP. the person of the tyrant, without aiming their blow at the authority of the emperor.

> There appears, indeed, one memorable occafion, in which the senate, after seventy years of patience, made an ineffectual attempt to reassume its long forgotten rights. When the throne was vacant by the murder of Caligula, the confuls convoked that affembly in the Capitol, condemned the memory of the Cæfars, gave the watchword liberty to the few cohorts who faintly adhered to their standard, and during eight and forty hours acted as the independent chiefs of a free commonwealth. But while they deliberated, the Prætorian guards had resolved. The stupid Claudius, brother of Germanicus, was already in their camp, invested with the Imperial purple, and prepared to support his election by arms. The dream of liberty was at an end; and the fenate awoke to all the horrors of inevitable fervitude. Deferted by the people, and threatened by a military force, that feeble affembly was compelled to ratify the choice of the Prætorians, and to embrace the benefit of an amnesty, which Claudius had the prudence to offer, and the generofity to observe 28.

Image of government for the armies.

II. The infolence of the armies inspired Augustus with fears of a still more alarming nature. The despair of the citizens could only attempt, what the power of the foldiers was, at any time,

²⁸ It is much to be regretted, that we have lost the part of Tacitus, which treated of that transaction. We are forced to content ourselves with the popular rumours of Josephus, and the imperfect hints of Dion and Sutton

able to execute. How precarious was his own CHAP. authority over men whom he had taught to violate every focial duty! He had heard their feditious clamours; he dreaded their calmer moments of reflection. One revolution had been purchased by immense rewards; but a second revolution might double those rewards. The troops professed the fondest attachment to the house of Cæsar; but the attachments of the multitude are capricious and inconstant. Augustus fummoned to his aid, whatever remained in those fierce minds, of Roman prejudices; enforced the rigour of discipline by the sanction of law; and interpoling the majesty of the senate, between the emperor and the army, boldly claimed their allegiance, as the first magistrate of the republic 29.

During a long period of two hundred and Their obetwenty years, from the establishment of this artful system to the death of Commodus, the dangers inherent to a military government were, in a great measure, suspended. The soldiers were seldom roused to that fatal sense of their own strength, and of the weakness of the civil authority, which was, before and afterwards, productive of fuch dreadful calamities. Caligula and Domitian were affassinated in their palace by their own domestics: the convulsions which agitated Rome on the death of the former, were confined to the walls of the city. But Nero involved the

dience.

²⁹ Augustus restored the ancient severity of discipline, After the civil wars, he dropped the endearing name of Fellow-Soldiers, and called them only Soldiers (Sueton. in August. c. 25.). See the use Tiberius made of the senate in the mutiny of the Pannonian legions (Tacit. Annal. i.).

CHAP.

whole empire in his ruin. In the space of eighteen months, four princes perished by the sword; and the Roman world was shaken by the sury of the contending armies. Excepting only this short, though violent, eruption of military licence, the two centuries from Augustus to Commodus passed away unstained with civil blood, and undisturbed by revolutions. The emperor was elected by the authority of the senate, and the consent of the soldiers 3°. The legions respected their oath of sidelity; and it requires a minute inspection of the Roman annals to discover three inconsiderable rebellions, which were all suppressed in a few months, and without even the hazard of a battle 31.

Delignation of a fucceffor.

whole

In elective monarchies, the vacancy of the throne is a moment big with danger and mischies. The Roman emperors, desirous to spare the legions that interval of suspense, and the temptation of an irregular choice, invested their designed successor with so large a share of present power, as should enable him, after their decease, to assume the remainder, without suffering the empire to perceive the change of masters. Thus

3º These words seem to have been the constitutional language. See Tacit. Annal. xiii. 4.

The first was Camillus Scribonianus, who took up arms in Dalmatia against Claudius, and was deserted by his own troops in five days. The second, L. Antonius, in Germany, who rebelled against Domitian; and the third, Avidius Cassus, in the reign of M. Antoninus. The two last reigned but a few months, and were cut off by their own adherents. We may observe, that both Camillus and Cassus coloured their ambition with the design of restoring the republic; a task, said Cassus, peculiarly reserved for his name and family.

Augustus

Augustus, after all his fairer prospects had been CHAP. fnatched from him by untimely deaths, rested his last hopes on Tiberius, obtained for his adopted Of Tiberius. fon the censorial and tribunitian powers, and dictated a law, by which the future prince was invested with an authority equal to his own, over the provinces and the armies 32. Thus Vespa- of Titus. fian subdued the generous mind of his eldest fon. Titus was adored by the eastern legions, which, under his command, had recently atchieved the conquest of Judæa. His power was dreaded. and, as his virtues were clouded by the intemperance of youth, his defigns were fuspected. Instead of listening to such unworthy suspicions, the prudent monarch affociated Titus to the full powers of the Imperial dignity; and the grateful fon ever approved himself the humble and faithful minister of fo indulgent a father 38.

The good fense of Vespasian engaged him in- The race deed to embrace every measure that might con- fars and the Flavi-firm his recent and precarious elevation. The an family. military oath, and the fidelity of the troops, had been confecrated, by the habits of an hundred years, to the name and family of the Cæfars: and although that family had been continued only by the fictitious rite of adoption, the Romans still revered, in the person of Nero, the grandson of Germanicus, and the lineal successor of Augustus. It was not without reluctance and remorfe, that the Prætorian guards had been

of the Cæ-

³² Velleius Paterculus, l. ii. c. 121. Sueton, in Tiber. c. 20.

³³ Sueton, in Tit. c. 6. Plin. in Præfat. Hist. Natur.

CHAP. perfuaded to abandon the cause of the tyrant 34, The rapid downfal of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, taught the armies to consider the emperors as the creatures of their will, and the instruments of their licence. The birth of Vespasian was mean; his grandfather had been a private foldier, his father a petty officer of the revenue 35; his own merit had raised him, in an advanced age, to the empire; but his merit was rather useful than shining, and his virtues were difgraced by a strict and even fordid parfimony. Such a prince confulted his true interest by the affociation of a son, whose more splendid and amiable character might turn the public attention, from the obscure origin, to the future glories of the Flavian house. Under the mild administration of Titus, the Roman world enjoyed a transient felicity, and his beloved memory ferved to protect, above fifteen years, the vices of his brother Domitian.

A. D. 96. Adoption and character of Trajan.

Nerva had scarcely accepted the purple from the affaffins of Domitian, before he discovered that his feeble age was unable to stem the torrent of public disorders, which had multiplied under the long tyranny of his predecessor. His mild disposition was respected by the good; but the degenerate Romans required a more vigorous character, whose justice should strike terror into the guilty. Though he had feveral relations, he

fixed

³⁴ This idea is frequently and strongly inculcated by Tacitus. See Hift. i. 5. 16. ii. 76.

³⁵ The emperor Vespasian, with his usual good sense, laughed at the Genealogists, who deduced his family from Flavius, the founder of Reate (his native country), and one of the companions of Hercules, Suet, in Vespasian. c. 12.

fixed his choice on a stranger. He adopted Tra- CHAP. jan, then about forty years of age, and who commanded a powerful army in the Lower Germany; and immediately, by a decree of the fenate, declared him his colleague and fucceffor in the empire 36. It is fincerely to be lamented, that A. D. 98. whilft we are fatigued with the difguftful relation of Nero's crimes and follies, we are reduced to collect the actions of Trajan from the glimmerings of an abridgment, or the doubtful light of a panegyric. There remains, however, one panegyric far removed beyond the fuspicion of flattery. Above two hundred and fifty years after the death of Trajan, the senate, in pouring out the cultomary acclamations on the accession of a new emperor, wished that he might surpass the felicity of Augustus, and the virtue of Trajan 17. while the and being a bas parlown

We may readily believe, that the father of his A.D.117. country hesitated whether he ought to intrust the of Hadrivarious and doubtful character of his kinfman Hadrian with fovereign power. In his last moments, the arts of the empress Plotina either fixed the irrefolution of Trajan, or boldly supposed a fictitious adoption 38; the truth of which could not be fafely disputed, and Hadrian was

³⁶ Dion, l. lxviii. p. 1121. Plin. Secund. in Panegyric.

³⁷ Felicior Augusto, MELIOR TRAJANO. Eutrop. viii. 5.

³⁸ Dion (l. lxix. p. 1249.) affirms the whole to have been a fiction, on the authority of his father, who being governor of the province where Trajan died, had very good opportunities of fifting this mysterious transaction. Yet Dodwell (Prælect. Camden. xvii.) has maintained, that Hadrian was called to the certain hope of the empire, during the lifetime of Trajan.

CHAP. peaceably acknowledged as his lawful fucceffor. Under his reign, as has been already mentioned, the empire flourished in peace and prosperity. He encouraged the arts, reformed the laws, afferted military discipline, and visited all his provinces in person. His vast and active genius was equally fuited to the most enlarged views, and the minute details of civil policy. But the ruling paffions of his foul were curiofity and vanity. As they prevailed, and as they were attracted by different objects, Hadrian was, by turns, an excellent prince, a ridiculous fophist, and a jealous tyrant. The general tenor of his conduct deserved praise for its equity and moderation. Yet in the first days of his reign, he put to death four confular fenators, his personal enemies, and men who had been judged worthy of empire; and the tediousness of a painful illness rendered him, at last, peevish and cruel. The fenate doubted whether they should pronounce him a god or a tyrant; and the honours decreed to his memory were granted to the prayers of the pious Antoninus 39.

Adoption of the elder and younger Verus.

30000

- POSIL TO

The caprice of Hadrian influenced his choice of a fuccessor. After revolving in his mind several men of diftinguished merit, whom he esteemed and hated, he adopted Ælius Verus, a gay and voluptuous nobleman, recommended by uncommon beauty to the lover of Antinous 40.

³⁹ Dion (l. lxx. p. 1171.). Aurel. Victor.

⁴⁰ The deification of Antinous, his medals, statues, temples, city, oracles, and conftellation, are well known, and ftill dishonour

But while Hadrian was delighting himself with CHAB his own applause, and the acclamations of the foldiers, whose confent had been secured by an immense donative, the new Cæsar 41 was ravished from his embraces by an untimely death. He left only one fon. Hadrian commended the boy to the gratitude of the Antonines. He was adopted by Pius; and, on the accession of Marcus, was invested with an equal share of sovereign power. Among the many vices of this younger Verus, he possessed one virtue; a dutiful reverence for his wifer colleague, to whom he willingly abandoned the ruder cares of empire. The philosophic emperor diffembled his follies, lamented his early death, and cast a decent veil over his memory.

As foon as Hadrian's paffion was either grati- Adoption fied or disappointed, he resolved to deserve the of the two thanks of posterity, by placing the most exalted nines. merit on the Roman throne. His discerning eye easily discovered a senator about fifty years of age, blameless in all the offices of life, and a youth of about feventeen, whose riper years opened the fair prospect of every virtue: the elder of these was declared the son and successor of Hadrian, on condition, however, that he himfelf should immediately adopt the younger. The two Antonines (for it is of them that we are now speaking) governed the Roman world forty-two A.D.138.

the memory of Hadrian. Yet we may remark, that of the first fifteen emperors, Claudius was the only one whose take in love was entirely correct. For the honours of Antinous, fee Spanheim, Commentaire sur les Cæsars de Julien, p. 80.

41 Hift. August. p. 13. Aurelius Victor in Epitom.

years,

CHAP. years, with the same invariable spirit of wisdom and virtue. Although Pius had two fons 42, he preferred the welfare of Rome to the interest of his family, gave his daughter Faustina in marriage to young Marcus, obtained from the fenate the tribunitian and proconfular powers, and with a noble disdain, or rather ignorance of jealoufy, affociated him to all the labours of government. Marcus, on the other hand, revered the character of his benefactor, loved him as a parent, obeyed him as his fovereign 43, and, after he was no more, regulated his own administration by the example and maxims of his predecessor. Their united reigns are possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the fole object of government.

Character and reign of Pius.

mingold

west out to

Titus Antoninus Pius has been justly denominated a fecond Numa. The fame love of religion, justice, and peace, was the distinguishing characteristic of both princes. But the situation of the latter opened a much larger field for the exercise of those virtues. Numa could only prevent a few neighbouring villages from plundering each other's harvests. Antoninus diffused order and tranquillity over the greatest part of the earth. His reign is marked by the rare advantage of furnishing very few materials for history; which is, indeed, little more than the

43 Without the help of medals and infcriptions, we should be ignorant of this fact, so honourable to the memory of Pius.

⁴³ During the twenty-three years of Pius's reign, Marcus was only two nights absent from the palace, and even those were at different times. Hift, August. p. 25.

register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes CHAP. of mankind. In private life, he was an amiable, as well as a good man. The native fimplicity of his virtue was a stranger to vanity or affectation. He enjoyed with moderation, the conveniencies of his fortune, and the innocent pleasures of society "; and the benevolence of his foul displayed itself in a cheerful serenity of tem-

The virtue of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was Of Marof a severer and more laborious kind 45. It was the well-earned harvest of many a learned conference, of many a patient lecture, and many a midnight lucubration. At the age of twelve years he embraced the rigid fystem of the Stoicks, which taught him to fubmit his body to his mind, his passions to his reason; to consider virtue as the only good, vice as the only evil, all things external, as things indifferent 46. His

44 He was fond of the theatre, and not infensible to the charms of the fair fex. Marcus Antoninus, i. 16. Hift. August. p. 20, 21. Julian in Cæfar.

45 The enemies of Marcus charged him with hypocrify, and with a want of that fimplicity which diftinguished Pius and even Verus (Hift. August. 6. 34.). This suspicion, unjust as it was, may serve to account for the superior applause bestowed upon personal qualifications, in preference to the focial virtues. Even Marcus Antoninus has been called a hypocrite; but the wildest scepticism never infinuated that Cæfar might possibly be a coward, or Tully a fool. Wit and valour are qualifications more easily ascertained, than humanity or the love of justice.

46 Tacitus has characterized, in a few words, the principles of the portico: Doctores sapientiæ secutus est, qui sola bona quæ honesta, mala tantum quæ turpia; potentiam, nobilitatem, cæteraque extra animum, neque bonis neque malis adnumerant. Tacit. Hift. iv. 5.

CHAP meditations, composed in the tumult of a camp, are fill extant; and he even condescended to give lessons of philosophy, in a more public manner, than was perhaps confident with the modesty of a sage, or the dignity of an emperor 47. But his life was the noblest commentary on the precepts of Zeno. He was severe to himfelf, indulgent to the imperfection of others, just and beneficent to all mankind. He regretted that Avidius Caffius, who excited a rebellion in Syria, had disappointed him, by a voluntary death, of the pleasure of converting an enemy into a friend; and he justified the fincerity of that fentiment, by moderating the zeal of the senate against the adherents of the traitor 48. War he detested, as the disgrace and calamity of human nature; but when the necessity of a just defence called upon him to take up arms, he readily exposed his person to eight winter campaigns, on the frozen banks of the Danube, the severity of which was at last fatal to the weakness of his constitution. His memory was revered by a grateful posterity, and above a century after his death, many persons preserved the image of Marcus Antoninus, among those of their household gods 49.

Happiness of the Romans.

If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosper-

⁴⁷ Before he went on the second expedition against the Germans, he read lectures of philosophy to the Roman people, during three days. He had already done the fame in the cities of Greece and Afia. Hift. August. in Cassio, c. 3.

⁴⁸ Dion, l. lxxi. p. 1190. Hift. August. in Avid. Cassio.

⁴⁹ Hift. August, in Marc. Antonin. c. 18.

rous, he would, without hesitation, name that CHAP. which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honour of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their days been capable of enjoying a rational freedom.

The labours of these monarchs were overpaid Its precaby the immense reward that inseparably waited rious naon their fuccess; by the honest pride of virtue. and by the exquisite delight of beholding the general happiness of which they were the authors. A just, but melancholy reflection embittered, however, the noblest of human enjoyments. They must often have recollected the instability of a happiness which depended on the character of a fingle man. The fatal moment was perhaps approaching, when fome licentious youth, or fome jealous tyrant, would abuse, to the destruction, that absolute power, which they had exerted for the benefit of their people. The ideal restraints of the senate and the laws might serve

nairea

CHAP. to display the virtues, but could never correct the vices, of the emperor. The military force was a blind and irrefiftible instrument of oppression; and the corruption of Roman manners would always supply flatterers eager to applaud, and ministers prepared to serve, the fear or the avarice, the lust or the cruelty, of their masters.

of Tiberi ms, Caligula, Ne-

These gloomy apprehensions had been already justified by the experience of the Romans. The annals of the emperors exhibit a strong and various Domitian. picture of human nature, which we should vainly feek among the mixed and doubtful characters of modern history. In the conduct of those monarchs we may trace the utmost lines of vice and virtue; the most exalted perfection, and the meanest degeneracy of our own species. golden age of Trajan and the Antonines had been preceded by an age of iron. It is almost superfluous to enumerate the unworthy successors of Augustus. Their unparalleled vices, and the splendid theatre on which they were acted, have faved them from oblivion. The dark unrelenting Tiberius, the furious Caligula, the feeble Claudius, the profligate and cruel Nero, the beaftly Vitellius 50, and the timid inhuman Domitian, are condemned to everlasting infamy.

> 50 Vitellius confumed in mere eating, at least fix millions of our money, in about seven months. It is not easy to express his vices with dignity, or even decency. Tacitus fairly calls him a hog; but it is by fubflituting to a coarse word a very fine image. " At Vitelet lius, umbraculis hortorum abditus, ut ignava animalia, quibus " fi cibum suggeras jacent torpentque, præterita, instantia, futura, si pari oblivione dimiserat. Atque illum nemore Arcino desidem et et marcentem, &c." Tacit. Hift. iii. 36. ii. 95. Vitell. c. 13. Dion Cassius, l. lxv. p. 1062.

> > During

d

9

During fourscore years (excepting only the short CHAP. and doubtful respite of Vespasian's reign 31) Rome groaned beneath an unremitting tyranny, which exterminated the ancient families of the republic, and was fatal to almost every virtue, and every talent, that arose in that unhappy period.

Under the reign of these monsters, the slavery Peculiar of the Romans was accompanied with two pecu- the Roliar circumstances, the one occasioned by their mans under their . former liberty, the other by their extensive con- tyrants. quests, which rendered their condition more completely wretched than that of the victims of tyranny in any other age or country. From these causes were derived, 1. The exquisite sensibility of the fufferers; and, 2. the impossibility of escaping from the hand of the oppressor.

I. When Persia was governed by the descend- Insensibiants of Sefi, a race of princes, whose wanton cru- lity of the Orientals: elty often stained their divan; their table, and their bed, with the blood of their favourites, there is a faying recorded of a young nobleman, That he never departed from the fultan's prefence, without fatisfying himself whether his head was still on his shoulders. The experience of every day might almost justify the scepticism of Rustan 52. Yet the fatal sword, suspended above him by a fingle thread, feems not to have disturbed the sumbers, or interrupted the tranquillity, of the Persian. The monarch's frown. he well knew, could level him with the duft;

⁵¹ The execution of Helvidius Priscus, and of the virtuous Eponina, difgraced the reign of Verpafian.

⁵² Voyage de Chardin en Perse, vol. iii. p. 293.

Carlo, Altaria

STATE THE PARTY OF 2128

CHAP. but the stroke of lightning or apoplexy might be equally fatal; and it was the part of a wife man, to forget the inevitable calamities of human life in the enjoyment of the fleeting hour. He was dignified with the appellation of the king's flave; had, perhaps, been purchased from obscure parents, in a country which he had never known; and was trained up from his infancy in the severe discipline of the seraglio 53. His name, his wealth, his honours, were the gift of a master, who might, without injustice, resume what he had bestowed. Rustan's knowledge, if he possessed any, could only serve to confirm his habits by prejudices. His language afforded not words for any form of government, except absolute monarchy. history of the east informed him, that such had ever been the condition of mankind 34. The Koran, and the interpreters of that divine book, inculcated to him, that the fultan was the defcendant of the prophet, and the vicegerent of heaven; that patience was the first virtue of a Musfulman, and unlimited obedience the great duty of a subject.

Knowledge and free spirit of the Romans.

THE REAL PROPERTY.

> The minds of the Romans were very differently prepared for flavery. Oppressed beneath the weight of their own corruption and of military violence, they for a long while preferved the

P

f

E

ti

g

ti

ri

mi

⁵⁷ The practice of raifing flaves to the great offices of state is still more common among the Turks than among the Persians. The miserable countries of Georgia and Circassia supply rulers to the greatest part of the east.

⁵⁴ Chardin fays, that European travellers have diffused among the Perhans some ideas of the freedom and mildness of our governments. They have done them a very ill office.

sentiments, or at least the ideas, of their free- CHAP. born ancestors. The education of Helvidius and Thrasea, of Tacitus and Pliny, was the same as that of Cato and Cicero. From Grecian philosophy, they had imbibed the justest and most liberal notions of the dignity of human nature, and the origin of civil fociety. The history of their own country had taught them to revere a free, a virtuous, and a victorious commonwealth; to abhor the fuccessful crimes of Cæsar and Augustus; and inwardly to despise those tyrants whom they adored with the most abject flattery. As magistrates and senators, they were admitted into the great council, which had once dictated laws to the earth, whose name still gave a fanction to the acts of the monarch, and whose authority was fo often proftituted to the vilest purposes of tyranny. Tiberius, and those emperors who adopted his maxims, attempted to disguise their murders by the formalities of justice, and perhaps enjoyed a fecret pleasure in rendering the fenate their accomplice as well as their victim. By this affembly, the last of the Romans were condemned for imaginary crimes and real virtues. Their infamous accusers assumed the language of independent patriots, who arraigned a dangerous citizen before the tribunal of his country; and the public service was rewarded by riches and honours 55. The fervile judges profeffed

f

1

f

a

t

h

-

e

ill

he he

he

ts.

i-

⁵⁵ They alleged the example of Scipio and Cato (Tacit. Annal. iii. 66.). Marcellus Epirus and Crifpus Vibius had acquired two millions

CHAP. fessed to affert the majesty of the commonwealth, violated in the person of its first magistrate ", whose elemency they most applauded when they trembled the most at his inexotable and impending cruelty 57. The tyrant beheld their baseness with just contempt, and encountered their fecret fentiments of deteftation with fincere and avowed hatred for the whole body of the fenate.

Extent of their empire left them no place of refuge.

II. The division of Europe into a number of independent states, connected, however, with each other, by the general refemblance of religion, language, and manners, is productive of the most beneficial consequences to the liberty of mankind. A modern tyrant, who should find no relistance either in his own breaft, or in his people, would foon experience a gentle restraint from the example of his equals, the dread of present censure, the advice of his allies, and the apprehension of his enemies. The object of his displeasure, escaping from the narrow limits of

millions and a half under Nero. Their wealth, which aggravated their crimes, protected them under Vespasian. See Tacit. Hist. iv. 43. Dialog. de Orator. c. 8. For one accusation, Regulus, the just object of Pliny's satire, received from the senate the consular ornaments, and a present of fixty-thousand pounds.

56 The crime of majesty was formerly a treasonable offence against the Roman people. As tribunes of the people, Augustus and Tiberius applied it to their own persons, and extended it to an infinite attitude.

57 After the virtuous and unfortunate widow of Germanicus had been put to death, Tiberius received the thanks of the fenate for his clemency. She had not been publicly strangled; nor was the body drawn with a hook to the Gemoniæ, where those of common malefactors were exposed. See Tacit. Annal. vi. 25. Sucton. in Tiberio, c. 53.

his

his dominions, would eafily obtain, in a happier CHAP. climate, a secure refuge, a new fortune adequate to his merit, the freedom of complaint, and perhaps the means of revenge. But the empire of the Romans filled the world, and when that empire fell into the hands of a fingle person, the world became a fafe and dreary prison for his enemies. The flave of Imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus, or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in filent despair 58. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, his anxious view could discover nothing, except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, hostile tribes of barbarians, of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings, who would gladly purchase the emperor's protection by the facrifice of an obnoxious fugitive 59. " Wherever you are," faid Cicero

⁵⁸ Seriphus was a small rocky island in the Ægean Sea, the inhabitants of which were despised for their ignorance and obscurity. The place of Ovid's exile is well known, by his just, but unmanly lamentations. It should seem, that he only received an order to leave Rome in so many days, and to transport himself to Tomi, Guards and gaolers were unnecessary.

⁵⁹ Under Tiberius, a Roman knight attempted to fly to the Parthians. He was stopt in the Streights of Sicily; but so little danger

CHAP. Cicero to the exiled Marcellus, "remember that
"you are equally within the power of the con"queror 60."

did there appear in the example, that the most jealous of tyrants disdained to punish it. Tacit. Annal. vi. 14.

Hent defects " To self had freely and

could all carety near many except tours

impodible to div. On ever with the time and the control of the con

and works to easily and a series being for

Colle Carrier Vision Lebert cally office income

10 December in words Your restorm Seem to

The state of the said of the said of the said of the said of

The open have given a training of the second

en and the second of the second of the second of the second

The Million of Lander Later Million

group of the day of the state o

A STAN STAN STAN STAN STAN STAN STAN

6e Cicero ad Familiares, iv. 7.

Whitemer Burnish art the to the configurate Annie

a manufaction burg to this believe the part of and consideration of

CHAP. IV.

lif.

The cruelty, follies, and murder of Commodus .-Election of Pertinax—bis attempts to reform the State-bis affassination by the Prætorian Guards.

HE mildness of Marcus, which the rigid CHAP. discipline of the Stoics was unable to eradicate, formed, at the same time, the most amiable, and the only defective, part of his character. His excellent understanding was often deceived by the unsuspecting goodness of his heart. Artful men, who study the passions of princes, and conceal their own, approached his person in the disguise of philosophic fanctity, and acquired riches and honours by affecting to despise them . His excessive indulgence to his brother, his wife, and his fon, exceeded the bounds of private virtue, and became a public injury, by the example and consequences of their vices.

Faustina, the daughter of Pius and the wife to his wife of Marcus, has been as much celebrated for her gallantries as for her beauty. The grave fimplicity of the philosopher was ill calculated to engage her wanton levity, or to fix that unbounded passion for variety, which often discovered personal merit in the meanest of man-

Faustina;

Indul-

gence of Marcus,

¹ See the complaints of Avidius Cassius, Hist. August. p. 45. These are, it is true, the complaints of faction; but even faction exaggerates, rather than invents.

CHAP. kind?. The Cupid of the ancients was, in general, a very fenfual deity; and the amours of an empress, as they exact on her fide the plainest advances, are feldom susceptible of much sentimental delicacy. Marcus was the only man in the empire who feemed ignorant or infensible of the irregularities of Faustina; which, according to the prejudices of every age, reflected fome difgrace on the injured husband, He promoted several of her lovers to posts of honour and profit 3, and during a connexion of thirty years, invariably gave her proofs of the most tender confidence, and of a respect which ended not with In his Meditations, he thanks the gods, her life. who had bestowed on him a wife, so faithful, so gentle, and of fuch a wonderful simplicity of manners . The obsequious senate, at his earnest request, declared her a goddess. She was represented in her temples, with the attributes of Juno, Venus, and Ceres; and it was decreed, that, on the day of their nuptials, the youth of either fex should pay their vows before the altar of their chaste patroness's.

The

² Faustinam satis constat apud Cayetam, conditiones sibi et nauticas et gladiatorias, elegisse. Hist. August. p. 30. Lampridius explains the fort of merit which Faustina chose, and the conditions which she exacted. Hift. August. p. 102.

³ Hift. August. p. 34.

⁴ Meditat. l. i. The world has laughed at the credulity of Marcus; but Madam Dacier affores us (and we may credit a lady), that the husband will always be deceived, if the wife condescends to diffemble.

⁵ Dion Caffius, 1. Ixxi. p. 1195. Hift. August. p. 33. Commentaire de Spanheim fur les Cesars de Julien, p. 289. The deification of Faustina is the only defect which Julian's criticism is able to discover in the all-accomplished character of Marcus.

The monstrous vices of the son have cast a CHAP. shade on the purity of the father's virtues. It has been objected to Marcus, that he facrificed to his fon Commothe happiness of millions to a fond partiality for dus. a worthless boy; and that he chose a successor in his own family, rather than in the republica Nothing, however, was neglected by the anxious father, and by the men of virtue and learning whom he summoned to his affistance, to expand the narrow mind of young Commodus, to correct his growing vices, and to render him worthy of the throne, for which he was defigned. But the power of instruction is seldom of much efficacy, except in those happy dispositions where it is almost superfluous. The distasteful lesson of a grave philosopher was, in a moment, obliterated by the whisper of a profligate favourite; and Marcus himself blasted the fruits of this laboured education, by admitting his fon, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, to a full participation of the Imperial power. He lived but four years afterwards; but he lived long enough to repent a rash measure, which raised the imperuous youth above the restraint of reason and authority.

Most of the crimes which disturb the internal Accession peace of fociety, are produced by the reftraints peror which the necessary, but unequal laws of produs. perty, have imposed on the appetites of mankind, by confining to a few the possession of those objects that are coveted by many. Of all our paffions and appetites, the love of power is of the most imperious and unsociable nature, since the pride of one man requires the fubmission of

CHAP, the multitude. In the tumult of civil discord, the laws of fociety lofe their force, and their place is feldom supplied by those of humanity. The ardor of contention, the pride of victory, the despair of success, the memory of past injuries, and the fear of future dangers, all contribute to inflame the mind, and to filence the voice of pity. From fuch motives almost every page of history has been stained with civil blood; but these motives will not account for the unprovoked cruelties of Commodus, who had nothing to wish, and every thing to enjoy. The beloved

A.D.180. fon of Marcus succeeded to his father, amidst the acclamations of the senate and armies, and when he ascended the throne, the happy youth faw round him neither competitor to remove, nor enemies to punish. In this calm elevated station, it was furely natural, that he should prefer the love of mankind to their detestation, the mild glories of his five predecessors, to the ignominious fate of Nero, and Domitian.

Character of Commodus.

Yet Commodus was not, as he has been reprefented, a tiger born with an infatiate thirst of human blood, and capable, from his infancy, of the most inhuman actions 7. Nature had formed him of a weak, rather than a wicked disposition. His simplicity and timidity rendered him the slave of his attendants, who gradually corrupted his

mind.

⁶ Commodus was the first Porphyrogenetus (born fince his father's accession to the throne). By a new strain of flattery, the Egyptian medals date by the years of his life; as if they were fynonymous to those of his reign. Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. ii. p. 752. 7 Hift. August. p. 46.

mind. His cruelty, which at first obeyed the CHAP. dictates of others, degenerated into habit, and at length became the ruling passion of his foul 3.

Upon the death of his father, Commodus He returns found himself embarrassed with the command of to Rome. a great army, and the conduct of a difficult war against the Quadi and Marcomanni?. The fervile and profligate youths whom Marcus had banished, soon regained their station and influence about the new emperor. They exaggerated the hardships and dangers of a campaign in the wild countries beyond the Danube; and they affured the indolent prince, that the terror of his name and the arms of his lieutenants would be fufficient to complete the conquest of the dismayed barbarians; or to impose such conditions, as were more advantageous than any conquest. By a dextrous application to his fenfual appetites, they compared the tranquillity, the splendour, the refined pleasures of Rome, with the tumult of a Pannonian camp, which afforded neither leifure nor materials for luxury 10. Commodus listened to the pleasing advice; but whilst he hesitated between his own inclination, and the awe which he still retained for his father's counsellors, the summer infenfibly elapfed, and his triumphal entry into the capital was deferred till the autumn. His graceful person ", popular address, and imagined

⁸ Dion Caffius, 1. lxxii. p. 1203.

⁹ According to Tertullian (Apolog. c. 25.), he died at Sirmium. But the fituation of Vindobona, or Vienna, where both the Victors place his death, is better adapted to the operations of the war against the Marcomanni and Quadi.

¹⁰ Herodian, 1. i. p. 12.

Herodian, l. i. p. 16.

CHAP. virtues, attracted the public favour; the honourable peace which he had recently granted to the barbarians, diffused an universal joy 12; his impatience to revisit Rome was fondly ascribed to the love of his country; and his dissolute course of amusements was faintly condemned in a prince of nineteen years of age,

During the three first years of his reign, the forms, and even the spirit of the old administration were maintained by those faithful counsellors, to whom Marcus had recommended his fon, and for whose wisdom and integrity Commodus still entertained a reluctant esteem. The young prince and his profligate favourites revelled in all the licence of fovereign power; but his hands were yet unstained with blood; and he had even difplayed a generofity of fentiment, which might perhaps have ripened into folid virtue". A fatal incident decided his fluctuating character.

ed by an affassin. A. D.183.

Is wound- One evening, as the emperor was returning to the palace through a dark and narrow portico in the amphitheatre ", an affaffin, who waited his paffage, rushed upon him with a drawn fword, loudly exclaiming, " The fenate fends you this." The menace prevented the deed; the affaffin was feized by the guards, and immediately revealed the authors of the conspiracy. It had been form-

> 12 This univerfal joy is well defcribed (from the medals as well as historians) by Mr. Wotton, Hist. of Rome, p. 192, 193.

See Maffei degli Amphitheatri, p. 126.

Manilius, the confidential fecretary of Avidius Caffius, was discovered after he had lain concealed several years. The emperor nobly relieved the public anxiety by refusing to see him, and burning his papers without opening them. Dion Caffius, 1. lxxii. p. 1209.

ed, not in the state, but within the walls of the CHAP. palace. Lucilla, the emperor's fifter, and widow of Lucius Verus, impatient of the fecond rank, and jealous of the reigning empress, had armed the murderer against her brother's life. She had not ventured to communicate the black delign to her second husband Claudius Pompeianus, a fenator of diffinguished merit and unshaken loyalty; but among the crowd of her lovers (for she imitated the manners of Faustina) she found men of desperate fortunes and wild ambition, who were prepared to serve her more violent, as well as her tender passions. The conspirators experienced the rigor of justice, and the abandoned princess was punished, first with exile, and afterwards with death 15.

But the words of the affaffin funk deep into the Hatredand mind of Commodus, and left an indelible im- cruelty of pression of fear and hatred against the whole body dus toof the fenate. Those whom he had dreaded as senate. importunate ministers, he now suspected as secret enemies. The Delators, a race of men discouraged, and almost extinguished, under the former reigns; again became formidable, as foon as they discovered that the emperor was desirous of finding disaffection and treason in the senate. That affembly, whom Marcus had ever confidered as the great council of the nation, was composed of the most distinguished of the Romans; and distinction of every kind soon became criminal.

¹⁵ Dion, I. Ixxii. p. 1205. Herodian, I. i. p. 16. Hift. Auguft. p. 46.

CHAP. The possession of wealth stimulated the diligence of the informers; rigid virtue implied a tacit censure of the irregularities of Commodus; important fervices implied a dangerous superiority of merit; and the friendship of the father always ensured the aversion of the son. Suspicion was equivalent to proof. Trial to condemnation. The execution of a confiderable fenator was attended with the death of all who might lament or revenge his fate; and when Commodus had once tasted human blood, he became incapable of pity or remorfe.

The Quinthers.

Of these innocent victims of tyranny, none tilian bro- died more lamented than the two brothers of the Quintilian family, Maximus and Condianus; whose fraternal love has faved their names from oblivion, and endeared their memory to posterity. Their studies and their occupations, their pursuits and their pleasures, were still the same. In the enjoyment of a great estate, they never admitted the idea of a separate interest; some fragments are now extant of a treatife which they composed in common; and in every action of life it was observed, that their two bodies were animated by one foul. The Antonines, who valued their virtues, and delighted in their union, raised them, in the same year, to the confulfhip: and Marcus afterwards intrusted to their joint care, the civil administration of Greece, and a great military command, in which they obtained a fignal victory over the Germans. The kind

kind cruelty of Commodus united them in CHAP. death 16.

The tyrant's rage, after having shed the noblest The miblood of the fenate, at length recoiled on the ennis. principal instrument of his cruelty. Whilst Commodus was immerfed in blood and luxury, he devolved the detail of the public business on Perennis; a servile and ambitious minister, who had obtained his post by the murder of his predecessor, but who possessed a considerable share of vigour and ability. By acts of extortion, and the forfeited estates of the nobles facrificed to his avarice, he had accumulated an immense treafure. The Prætorian guards were under his immediate command; and his fon, who already discovered a military genius, was at the head of the Illyrian legions. Perennis aspired to the empire; or what, in the eyes of Commodus, amounted to the fame crime, he was capable of aspiring to it, had he not been prevented, surprised, and put to death. The fall of a minister A. D. 186. is a very trifling incident in the general history of the empire; but it was hastened by an extraordinary circumstance, which proved how much the nerves of discipline were already relaxed. The legions of Britain, discontented with the administration of Perennis, formed a deputation of fifteen hundred select men, with instructions to march to Rome, and lay their complaints before the emperor. These military petitioners,

16 In a note upon the Augustan History, Casaubon has collected a number of particulars concerning these celebrated brothers. See p. 96, of his learned commentary.

CHAP. by their own determined behaviour, by inflaming the divisions of the guards, by exaggerating the strength of the British army, and by alarming the fears of Commodus, exacted and obtained the minister's death, as the only redress of their grievances 17. This prefumption of a distant army, and their discovery of the weakness of government, was a fure prefage of the most dreadful convulsions.

Revolt of Maternus.

The negligence of the public administration was betrayed foon afterwards, by a new diforder which arose from the smallest beginnings. A spirit of desertion began to prevail among the troops; and the deferters, instead of seeking their fafety in flight or concealment, infested the highways. Maternus, a private foldier, of a daring boldness above his station, collected these bands of robbers into a little army, fet open the prisons, invited the flaves to affert their freedom, and plundered with impunity the rich and defenceless cities of Gaul and Spain. The governors of the provinces, who had long been the spectators, and perhaps the partners, of his depredations, were, at length, roused from their fupine indolence by the threatening commands of the emperor. Maternus found that he was encompassed, and foresaw that he must be overpowered. A great effort of despair was his last resource. He ordered his followers to disperse,

¹⁷ Dion, l. lxxii. p. 1210. Herodian, l. i. p. 22. Hift. August. p. 48. Dion gives a much less odious character of Perennis, than the other historians. His moderation is almost a pledge of his veracity.

to pass the Alps in small parties and various dif- CHAP. guises, and to affemble at Rome, during the licentious tumult of the festival of Cybele 18. To murder Commodus, and to ascend the vacant throne, was the ambition of no vulgar robber. His measures were fo ably concerted, that his concealed troops already filled the streets of Rome. The envy of an accomplice discovered and ruined this fingular enterprise, in the moment when it was ripe for execution 19.

Suspicious princes often promote the last of Theminimankind from a vain persuasion, that those who fer Cleanhave no dependence, except on their favour, will have no attachment, except to the person of their benefactor. Cleander, the fuccessor of Perennis, was a Phrygian by birth; of a nation, over whose stubborn, but servile temper, blows only could prevail 20. He had been fent from his native country to Rome, in the capacity of a flave. As a slave he entered the Imperial palace, rendered himself useful to his master's passions, and rapidly ascended to the most exalted station which a subject could enjoy. His influence over the mind of Commodus was much greater than that of his predecessor; for Cleander was devoid of

18 During the fecond Punic war, the Romans imported from Asia the worship of the mother of the gods. Her festival, the Megalesia, began on the fourth of April, and lasted fix days. The streets were crowded with mad processions, the theatres with spectators; and the public tables with unbidden guests. Order and police were fuspended, and pleasure was the only serious business of the city. See Ovid. de Fastis, 1. iv. 189, &c.

19 Herodian, 1. i. p. 23. 28.

20 Cicero pro Flacco, c. 27.

C H A P. IV. His avarice and cruelty.

any ability or virtue which could inspire the emperor with envy or distrust. Avarice was the reigning passion of his foul, and the great principle of his administration. The rank of Conful, of Patrician, of Senator, was exposed to public fale; and it would have been confidered as difaffection, if any one had refused to purchase these empty and disgraceful honours with the greatest part of his fortune ". In the lucrative provincial employments, the minister shared with the governor the spoils of the people. The execution of the laws was venal and arbitrary. A wealthy criminal might obtain, not only the reversal of the sentence by which he was justly condemned; but might likewise inflict whatever punishment he pleased on the accuser, the witnesses, and the judge.

By these means, Cleander, in the space of three years, had accumulated more wealth than had ever yet been possessed by any freedman 22. Commodus was perfectly satisfied with the magnificent presents which the artful courtier laid at his feet in the most seasonable moments. To divert the public envy, Cleander, under the emperor's name, erected baths, porticos, and places of exercise, for the use of the people 23. He

One of these dear-bought promotions occasioned a current bon mot, that Julius Solon was banished into the senate.

²² Dion (l. lxxii. p. 12, 13.) observes, that no freedman had posfessed riches equal to those of Cleander. The fortune of Pallas amounted, however, to upwards of five and twenty hundred thousand pounds; Ter millies.

²³ Dion, l. lxxii. p. 12, 13. Herodian, l. i. p. 29. Hist. August. p. 52. These baths were situated near the Porta Capena. See Nardini Roma Antica, p. 79.

flattered himself that the Romans, dazzled and CHAP. amused by this apparent liberality, would be less _ affected by the bloody scenes which were daily exhibited; that they would forget the death of Byrrhus, a fenator to whose superior merit the late emperor had granted one of his daughters; and that they would forgive the execution of Arrius Antoninus, the last representative of the name and virtues of the Antonines. The former, with more integrity than prudence, had attempted to disclose, to his brother-in-law, the true character of Cleander. An equitable sentence pronounced by the latter, when Proconful of Asia, against a worthless creature of the favourite, proved fatal to him 24. After the fall of Perennis, the terrors of Commodus had, for a fhort time, assumed the appearance of a return to virtue. He repealed the most odious of his acts, loaded his memory with the public execration, and ascribed to the pernicious counsels of that wicked minister, all the errors of his inexperienced youth. But his repentance lasted only thirty days; and, under Cleander's tyranny, the administration of Perennis was often regretted.

Pestilence and famine contributed to fill up the Sedition measure of the calamities of Rome 25. The first and death of Cleancould be only imputed to the just indignation of der. A.D.189. the gods; but a monopoly of corn, supported by the riches and power of the minister, was con-

1

1

E

19

e

d

3-

at 0

7-

es

Ie

on

oflas ou-

u-

See

at-

²⁴ Hift. August. p. 48.

²⁵ Herodian, 1. i. p. 28. Dion, l. lxxii. p. 1215. The latter fays, that two thousand persons died every day at Rome, during a considerable length of time.

CHAP.

fidered as the immediate cause of the second. The popular discontent, after it had long circulated in whispers, broke out in the assembled circus. The people quitted their favourite amusements, for the more delicious pleasure of revenge. rushed in crowds towards a palace in the suburbs. one of the emperor's retirements, and demanded, with angry clamours, the head of the public enemy. Cleander, who commanded the Prætorian guards 26, ordered a body of cavalry to fally forth, and disperse the seditious multitude. The multitude fled with precipitation towards the city; feveral were flain, and many more were trampled to death: but when the cavalry entered the streets, their pursuit was checked by a shower of stones and darts from the roofs and windows of the houses. The foot guards 27, who had been long jealous of the prerogatives and infolence of the Prætorian cavalry, embraced the party of the people. The tumult became a regular engagement, and threatened a general massacre. The Prætorians, at length, gave way, oppressed with numbers; and the tide of popular fury re-

turned

fe

²⁶ Tuncque primum tres præfecti prætorio fuere: inter quos libertinus. From some remains of modesty, Cleander declined the title, whilst he assumed the powers, of Prætorian præfect. As the other freedmen were styled, from their several departments, a resionibus, ab episolis; Cleander called himself a pugione, as intrusted with the defence of his master's person. Salmasius and Casaubon seem to have talked very idly upon this passage.

^{27 &#}x27;0ι της πέλεως πέζοι εςατίωτε. Herodian, l. i. p. 31. It is doubtful whether he means the Prætorian infantry, or the cohortes urbanæ, a body of fix thousand men, but whose rank and discipline were not equal to their numbers. Neither Tillemont nor Wotton chuse to decide this question.

d

,

3,

1,

-

n

13

;

d

ie

of

of

en

of

of

1-

e.

ed

e-

lì-

the

the

tioith

to

bt-

ıæ, not

to

ed

subjects 28.

turned with redoubled violence against the gates CHAP. of the palace, where Commodus lay, diffolved in _ luxury, and alone unconscious of the civil war. It was death to approach his person with the unwelcome news. He would have perished in this fupine fecurity, had not two women, his elder fister Fadilla, and Marcia, the most favoured of his concubines, ventured to break into his prefence. Bathed in tears, and with dishevelled hair, they threw themselves at his feet; and with all the preffing eloquence of fear, discovered to the affrighted emperor, the crimes of the minister, the rage of the people, and the impending ruin, which, in a few minutes, would burst over his palace and person. Commodus started from his dream of pleasure, and commanded that the head of Cleander should be thrown out to the people. The defired spectacle instantly appealed the tu-

But every fentiment of virtue and humanity Diffolute was extinct in the mind of Commodus. Whilft pleasures he thus abandoned the reins of empire to these modus. unworthy favourites, he valued nothing in fovereign power, except the unbounded licence of indulging his fenfual appetites. His hours were fpent in a seraglio of three hundred beautiful women, and as many boys, of every rank, and of every province; and, wherever the arts of seduction proved ineffectual, the brutal lover had

mult; and the fon of Marcus might even yet

have regained the affection and confidence of his

²⁸ Dion Cassius, l. lxxii. p. 1215. Herodian, l. i. p. 32. Hift. August. p. 48.

CHAP. recourse to violence. The ancient historians 39 have expatiated on these abandoned scenes of prostitution, which scorned every restraint of nature or modesty; but it would not be easy to translate their too faithful descriptions into the decency of modern language. The intervals of

His ignorance and low sports.

lust were filled up with the basest amusements. The influence of a polite age, and the labour of an attentive education, had never been able to infuse into his rude and brutish mind, the least tincture of learning; and he was the first of the Roman emperors totally devoid of taste for the pleasures of the understanding. Nero himself excelled, or affected to excel, in the elegant arts of music and poetry; nor should we despise his pursuits, had he not converted the pleasing relaxation of a leifure hour into the serious business and ambition of his life. But Commodus, from his earliest infancy, discovered an aversion to whatever was rational or liberal, and a fond attachment to the amusements of the populace; the fports of the circus and amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beafts, The masters in every branch of learning, whom Marcus provided for his fon, were heard with inattention and difgust; whilst the Moors and Parthians, who taught him to dart the javelin and to shoot with the bow, found a disciple who delighted in his application, and foon equalled

the

²⁹ Sororibus suis constupratis. Ipsas concubinas suas sub oculis fuis stuprari jubebat. Nec irruentium in se juvenum carebat infamia, omni parte corporis atque ore in fexum utrumque pollutus. Aug. P. 47:

OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

the most skilful of his instructors, in the steadi- C HAP. ness of the eye, and the dexterity of the hand.

of

of

to

the

of

its.

of

to

east

the

the

felf

arts

his

ax-

and

his

at-

ch-

the

m-

sts.

om

ith and

elin

vho

led

ulis

miâ,

Hift.

the

Hunting of wild

The fervile crowd, whose fortune depended on Hunting their master's vices, applauded these ignoble pur- beasts. fuits. The perfidious voice of flattery reminded him, that by exploits of the same nature, by the defeat of the Nemæan lion, and the slaughter of the wild boar of Erymanthus, the Grecian Hercules had acquired a place among the gods, and an immortal memory among men. They only forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, when the fiercer animals often dispute with man the possession of an unsettled country, a fuccessful war against those savages is one of the most innocent and beneficial labours of heroism. In the civilized state of the Roman empire, the wild beafts had long fince retired from the face of man, and the neighbourhood of populous cities. To surprise them in their solitary haunts, and to transport them to Rome, that they might be slain in pomp by the hand of an emperor, was an enterprise equally ridiculous for the prince, and oppressive for the people 30. Ignorant of these diffinctions, Commodus eagerly embraced the glorious resemblance, and stiled himself (as we

The African lions, when pressed by hunger, infested the open villages and cultivated country; and they infested them with impunity. The royal beast was reserved for the pleasures of the emperor and the capital; and the unfortunate peasant, who killed one of them, though in his own defence, incurred a very heavy penalty. This extraordinary game-law was mitigated by Honorius, and finally repealed by Justinian. Codex Theodos, tom. v. p. 92, et Comment, Gothofred.

Rill

CHAP. still read on his medals 31) the Roman Hercules. The club and the lion's hide were placed by the fide of the throne, amongst the ensigns of sovereignty; and statues were erected, in which Commodus was represented in the character, and with the attributes, of the god, whose valour and dexterity he endeavoured to emulate in the daily course of his ferocious amusements 32.

Commodus difplays his fkill in the amphitheatre.

Elated with these praises, which gradually extinguished the innate sense of shame, Commodus resolved to exhibit, before the eyes of the Roman people, those exercises, which till then he had decently confined within the walls of his palace, and to the presence of a few favourites. On the appointed day, the various motives of flattery, fear, and curiofity, attracted to the amphitheatre an innumerable multitude of spectators; and some degree of applause was deservedly bestowed on the uncommon skill of the Imperial performer. Whether he aimed at the head or heart of the animal, the wound was alike certain and mortal. With arrows, whose point was shaped into the form of a crescent, Commodus often intercepted the rapid career, and cut afunder the long bony neck of the oftrich 33. A panther was let loofe; and the archer waited till he had leaped upon a trembling malefactor. In the fame instant the shaft slew, the beast dropt dead, and the man remained unburt. The dens of the

³¹ Spanheim de Numismat. Dissertat. xii. tom. ii. p. 493.

³² Dion, 1. lxxii, p. 1216. Hift. August. p. 49.

³³ The offrich's neck is three feet long, and composed of seventeen vertebræ. See Buffon, Hist. Naturelle.

amphitheatre difgorged at once a hundred lions; CHAP. a hundred darts from the unerring hand of Commodus laid them dead as they ran raging round the Arena. Neither the huge bulk of the elephant, nor the scaly hide of the rhinoceros, could defend them from his stroke. Æthiopia and India vielded their most extraordinary productions; and feveral animals were flain in the amphitheatre, which had been feen only in the representations of art, or perhaps of fancy 24. In all these exhibitions, the securest precautions were used to protect the person of the Roman Hercules from the desperate spring of any savage; who might possibly difregard the dignity of the emperor, and the fanctity of the god 35.

But the meanest of the populace were affected A&s as a with shame and indignation when they beheld gladiator. their fovereign enter the lifts as a gladiator, and glory in a profession which the laws and manners of the Romans had branded with the justest note of infamy 36. He chose the habit and arms of

³⁴ Commodus killed a camelopardalis or Giraffe (Dion, l. lxxii. p. 1211), the tallest, the most gentle, and the most useless of the large quadrupeds. This fingular animal, a native only of the interior parts of Africa, has not been feen in Europe fince the revival of letters; and though M. de Buffon (Hist. Naturelle, tom. xiii.) has endeayoured to describe, he has not ventured to delineate, the Giraffe.

³⁵ Herodian, I. i. p. 37. Hift. August. p. 50.

³⁶ The virtuous and even the wife princes forbade the fenators and knights to embrace this fcandalous profession, under pain of infamy, or, what was more dreaded by those profligate wretches, of exile. The tyrants allured them to dishonour by threats and rewards. Nero once produced, in the Arena, forty fenators and fixty knights. See Lipsius, Saturnalia, I. ii. c. 2. He has happily corrected a paslage of Suetonius, in Nerone, c. 12.

CHAP, the Secutor, whose combat with the Retiarius formed one of the most lively scenes in the bloody sports of the amphitheatre. The Secutor was armed with an helmet, fword, and buckler; his naked antagonist had only a large net and a trident; with the one he endeavoured to entangle, with the other to dispatch, his enemy. If he missed the first throw, he was obliged to sly from the pursuit of the Secutor, till he had prepared his net for a second cast 37. The emperor fought in this character feven hundred and thirtyfive several times. These glorious atchievements were carefully recorded in the public acts of the empire; and that he might omit no circumstance of infamy, he received from the common fund of gladiators, a stipend so exorbitant, that it became a new and most ignominious tax upon the Roman people 38. It may be easily supposed, that in these engagements the master of the world was always fuccessful: in the amphitheatre his victories were not often fanguinary; but when he exercifed his skill in the school of gladiators, or his own palace, his wretched antagonists were frequently honoured with a mortal wound from the hand of Commodus, and obliged to feal their flattery with their blood 39. He now disdained the appellation of Hercules. The name of Paulus, a celebrated Secutor, was the only one which

His infamy and extravagance.

delighted

³⁷ Lipsius, I. ii. c. 7, 8. Juvenal, in the eighth satire, gives a picturesque description of this combat.

³⁸ Hist. August. p. 50. Dion, l. lxxii. p. 1220. He received, for each time, decies, about 8000 l. fterling.

³⁹ Victor tells us, that Commodus only allowed his antagonists a leaden weapon, dreading most probably the consequences of their despair.

delighted his ear. It was inscribed on his colossal chares, and repeated in the redoubled acclamations of the mournful and applauding senate characteristics. Claudius Pompeianus, the virtuous husband of Lucilla, was the only senator who afferted the honour of his rank. As a father, he permitted his sons to consult their safety by attending the amphitheatre. As a Roman, he declared, that his own life was in the emperor's hands, but that he would never behold the son of Marcus prostituting his person and dignity. Notwithstanding his manly resolution, Pompeianus escaped the resentment of the tyrant, and, with his honour, had the good fortune to preserve his life.

Commodus had now attained the summit of vice and infamy. Amidst the acclamations of a slattering court, he was unable to disguise, from himself, that he had deserved the contempt and hatred of every man of sense and virtue in his empire. His serocious spirit was irritated by the consciousness of that hatred, by the envy of every kind of merit, by the just apprehension of danger, and by the habit of slaughter, which he contracted in his daily amusements. History

⁴⁰ They were obliged to repeat fix hundred and twenty-fix times, Paulus first of the Secutors, &c.

⁴¹ Dion, 1. lxxii. p. 1221. He speaks of his own baseness and danger.

⁴² He mixed however some prudence with his courage, and passed the greatest part of his time in a country retirement; alleging his advanced age, and the weakness of his eyes. "I never saw him in "the senate, says Dion, except during the short reign of Pertinax." All his infirmities had suddenly left him, and they returned as suddenly upon the murder of that excellent prince. Dion, 1. lxxiii, P. 1227.

Conspiracy of his domeftics.

CHAP. has preferved a long lift of confular fenators facrificed to his wanton suspicion, which sought out, with peculiar anxiety, those unfortunate perfons connected, however remotely, with the family of the Antonines, without sparing even the ministers of his crimes or pleasures 43. His cruelty proved at last fatal to himself. He had shed with impunity the noblest blood of Rome: he perished as foon as he was dreaded by his own domestics. Marcia, his favourite concubine, Eclectus his chamberlain, and Lætus his Prætorian præfect, alarmed by the fate of their companions and predecessors, resolved to prevent the destruction which every hour hung over their heads, either from the mad caprice of the tyrant, or the fudden indignation of the people. Marcia seized the occasion of presenting a draught of wine to her lover, after he had fatigued himself with hunting some wild beafts. Commodus retired to fleep; but whilft he was labouring with the effects of poison and drunkenness, a robust youth, by profession a wrestler, entered his chamber. and strangled him without resistance. The body was fecretly conveyed out of the palace, before the least suspicion was entertained in the city, or even in the court, of the emperor's death. Such was the fate of the fon of Marcus, and so easy was it to destroy a hated tyrant, who, by the artificial powers of government, had oppressed, during thirteen years, fo many millions of subjects,

Death of Commodus. A. D. 192. 31ft December.

⁴³ The præfects were changed almost hourly or daily; and the caprice of Commodus was often fatal to his most favourite chamberlains. Hift. August. p. 46. 51.

each of whom was equal to their master in per- CHAP. fonal strength and personal abilities 44.

The measures of the conspirators were con- Choice of ducted with the deliberate coolness and celerity for empewhich the greatness of the occasion required. ror. They resolved instantly to fill the vacant throne with an emperor, whose character would justify and maintain the action that had been committed. They fixed on Pertinax, præfect of the city, an ancient fenator of confular rank, whose conspicuous merit had broke through the obscurity of his birth, and raifed him to the first honours of the state. He had successively governed

most of the provinces of the empire; and in all his great employments, military as well as civil, he had uniformly distinguished himself by the firmness, the prudence, and the integrity of his conduct 45. He now remained almost alone of

44 Dion, I. lxxii. p. 1222. Herodian, l.i. p. 42. Hift. August. P. 52.

the

⁴⁵ Pertinax was a native of Alba Pompeia, in Piedmont, and fon of a timber-merchant. The order of his employments (it is marked by Capitolinus) well deserves to be set down, as expressive of the form of government and manners of the age. 1. He was a centurion. 2. Præfect of a cohort in Syria, in the Parthian war, and in Britain. 3. He obtained an Ala, or squadron of horse, in Mæsia. 4. He was commissary of provisions on the Æmilian way. 5. He commanded the fleet upon the Rhine. 6. He was procurator of Dacia, with a falary of about 1600l. a year. 7. He commanded the Veterans of a legion. 8. He obtained the rank of senator. 9. Of prætor. 10. With the command of the first legion in Rhætia and Noricum. 11. He was conful about the year 175. 12. He attended Marcus into the east. 13. He commanded an army on the Danube. 14. He was confular legate of Mæsia. 15. Of Dacia. 16. Of Syria. 17. Of Britain. 18. He had the care of the public provisions

CHAP. the friends and ministers of Marcus; and when, at a late hour of the night, he was awakened with the news, that the chamberlain and the præfeet were at his door, he received them with intrepid refignation, and defired they would execute their master's orders. Instead of death. they offered him the throne of the Roman world. During fome moments he distrusted their intentions and affurances. Convinced at length of the death of Commodus, he accepted the purple with a fincere reluctance, the natural effect of his knowledge both of the duties and of the dangers of the supreme rank 46.

He is acknowledged by the Prætorian guards;

Lætus conducted without delay his new emperor to the camp of the Prætorians, diffusing at the fame time through the city a feafonable report that Commodus died fuddenly of an apoplexy; and that the virtuous Pertinax had already fucceeded to the throne. The guards were rather furprised than pleased with the suspicious death of a prince, whose indulgence and liberality they alone had experienced; but the emergency of the occasion, the authority of their præfect, the reputation of Pertinax, and the clamours of the people, obliged them to stifle their secret discontents, to accept the donative promifed of the new emperor, to swear allegiance to him, and with joyful acclamations and laurels in their hands to

at Rome. 19. He was proconsul of Africa. 20. Præfect of the city. Herodian (l. i. p. 48.) does justice to his difinterested spirit; but Capitolinus, who collected every popular rumour, charges him with a great fortune acquired by bribery and corruption.

46 Julian, in the Cæsars, taxes him with being accessary to the

death of Commodus.

conduct

conduct him to the senate-house, that the military CHAP. confent might be ratified by the civil authority.

This important night was now far spent; with and by the the dawn of day, and the commencement of the A.D.193. new year, the senators expected a summons to ary. attend an ignominious ceremony. In spite of all remonstrances, even of those of his creatures, who yet preferved any regard for prudence or decency, Commodus had refolved to pass the night in the gladiator's school, and from thence to take possession of the consulship, in the habit and with the attendance of that infamous crew. On a fudden, before the break of day, the senate was called together in the temple of Concord, to meet the guards, and to ratify the election of a new emperor. For a few minutes they fat in filent fuspence, doubtful of their unexpected deliverance, and fuspicious of the cruel artifices of Commodus; but when at length they were affured that the tyrant was no more, they refigned themfelves to all the transports of joy and indignation. Pertinax, who modeftly represented the meanness of his extraction, and pointed out several noble fenators more deferving than himfelf of the empire, was constrained by their dutiful violence to ascend the throne, and received all the titles of Imperial power, confirmed by the most fincere vows of fidelity. The memory of Com- The memodus was branded with eternal infamy. The names of tyrant, of gladiator, of public enemy, refounded in every corner of the house. They mousdecreed in tumultuous votes, that his honours

mory of Commo-

CHAP. should be reversed, his titles erased from the public monuments, his statues thrown down, his body dragged with a hook into the strippingroom of the gladiators, to fatiate the public fury; and they expressed some indignation against those officious fervants who had already prefumed to fcreen his remains from the justice of the senate. But Pertinax could not refuse those last rites to the memory of Marcus, and the tears of his first protector Claudius Pompeianus, who lamented the cruel fate of his brother-in-law, and lamented still more that he had deferved it 47.

Legal ju-risdiction of the fenate over the emperors.

The Whole

- Colons

Zirini, Arb.

These effusions of impotent rage against a dead emperor, whom the senate had flattered when alive with the most abject servility, betrayed a just but ungenerous spirit of revenge. The legality of these decrees was however supported by the principles of the Imperial constitution. censure, to depose, or to punish with death, the first magistrate of the republic, who had abused his delegated trust, was the ancient and undoubted prerogative of the Roman fenate 48; but that feeble affembly was obliged to content itself with inflicting on a fallen tyrant that public justice, from which, during his life and reign, he had been shielded by the strong arm of military defpotism.

income di with fator

e

ti

fa

W

on

⁴⁷ Capitolinus gives us the particulars of these tumultuary votes which were moved by one fenator, and repeated, or rather chanted by the whole body. Hift. August. p. 52.

⁴⁸ The senate condemned Nero to be put to death more majorum. Sueton, c. 49.

Pertinax found a nobler way of condemning CHAP. his predecessor's memory; by the contrast of his own virtues, with the vices of Commodus. On Virtues of the day of his accession, he resigned over to his wife and fon his whole private fortune; that they might have no pretence to folicit favours at the expence of the state. He refused to flatter the vanity of the former with the title of Augusta; or to corrupt the inexperienced youth of the latter by the rank of Cæsar. Accurately distinguishing between the duties of a parent and those of a sovereign, he educated his son with a fevere fimplicity, which, while it gave him no affured prospect of the throne, might in time have rendered him worthy of it. In public, the behaviour of Pertinax was grave and affable. He lived with the virtuous part of the senate (and in a private station, he had been acquainted with the true character of each individual), without either pride or jealoufy; confidered them as friends and companions, with whom he had shared the dangers of the tyranny, and with whom he wished to enjoy the security of the present time. He very frequently invited them to familiar entertainments, the frugality of which was ridiculed by those, who remembered and regretted the luxurious prodigality of Commodus 49.

49 Dion (1. lxxiii. p. 1223.) speaks of these entertainments, as a fenator who had supped with the emperor. Capitolinus (Hist. August. p. 58.), like a slave, who had received his intelligence from one of the fcullions.

CHAP.

To heal, as far as it was possible, the wounds inflicted by the hand of tyranny, was the pleafing, but melancholy, task of Pertinax. The reform the innocent victims, who yet furvived, were recalled from exile, released from prison, and restored to the full possession of their honours and fortunes. The unburied bodies of murdered fenators (for the cruelty of Commodus endeavoured to extend itself beyond death) were deposited in the sepulchres of their ancestors; their memory was justified; and every consolation was bestowed on their ruined and afflicted families. Among these consolations, one of the most grateful was the punishment of the Delators; the common enemies of their master, of virtue, and of their country. Yet even in the inquisition of these legal affaffins, Pertinax proceeded with a steady temper, which gave every thing to justice, and nothing to popular prejudice and refentment.

His regu. lations,

The finances of the state demanded the most vigilant care of the emperor. Though every measure of injustice and extortion had been adopted, which could collect the property of the fubject into the coffers of the prince; the rapaciousness of Commodus had been so very inadequate to his extravagance, that, upon his death, no more than eight thousand pounds were found in the exhausted treasury 50, to defray the current expences of government, and to discharge the pressing demand of a liberal donative, which

t

a

P

C

ti

⁵⁰ Decies. The blameless occonomy of Pius left his successors 2 treasure of vicies septies millies, above two and twenty millions sterling. Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1231. the

the new emperor had been obliged to promife CHAP. to the Prætorian guards. Yet under these diftreffed circumstances, Pertinax had the generous firmness to remit all the oppressive taxes invented by Commodus, and to cancel all the unjust claims of the treasury; declaring, in a decree of the fenate. " that he was better satisfied to administer " a poor republic with innocence, than to ac-" quire riches by the ways of tyranny and dif-" honour." Oeconomy and industry he confidered as the pure and genuine fources of wealth; and from them he foon derived a copious supply for the public necessities. The expence of the household was immediately reduced to one half. All the inftruments of luxury, Pertinax exposed to public auction 51, gold and filver plate, chariots of a fingular construction, a superfluous wardrobe of filk and embroidery, and a great number of beautiful flaves of both fexes; excepting only, with attentive humanity, those who were born in a state of freedom, and had been ravished from the arms of their weeping parents. At the same time that he obliged the worthless favourites of the tyrant to relign a part of their ill-gotten wealth, he fatisfied the just creditors of the state, and unexpectedly discharged the long arrears of honest services. He removed the oppressive restrictions which had been laid upon commerce, and granted all the uncultivated

money, Dion (l. lxxiii. p. 1229.) affigns two secret motives of Pertinax. He wished to expose the vices of Commodus, and to discover by the purchasers those who most resembled him.

would improve them; with an exemption from tribute, during the term of ten years 52.

and popularity.

Such an uniform conduct had already fecured to Pertinax the noblest reward of a sovereign, the love and efteem of his people. Those who remembered the virtues of Marcus were happy to contemplate in their new emperor the features of that bright original; and flattered themfelves, that they should long enjoy the benign influence of his administration. A hasty zeal to reform the corrupted state, accompanied with less prudence than might have been expected from the years and experience of Pertinax, proved fatal to himself and to his country. His honest indifcretion united against him the servile crowd, who found their private benefit in the public diforders, and who preferred the favour of a tyrant to the inexorable equality of the laws 53.

Discontent of the Prætorians. Amidst the general joy, the sullen and angry countenance of the Prætorian guards betrayed their inward dissatisfaction. They had reluctantly submitted to Pertinax; they dreaded the strictness of the ancient discipline, which he was preparing to restore; and they regretted the licence of the former reign. Their discontents were secretly somented by Lætus their præsect, who found, when it was too late, that his new emperor would reward a servant, but would not

⁵² Though Capitolinus has picked up many idle tales of the private life of Pertinax, he joins with Dion and Herodian in admiring his public conduct.

⁵³ Leges, rem surdam, inexorabilem esse. T. Liv. ii. 3.

be ruled by a favourite. On the third day of his CHAP. reign the foldiers feized on a noble fenator, with a defign to carry him to the camp, and to invest him with the Imperial purple. Instead of being dazzled by the dangerous honour, the affrighted victim escaped from their violence, and took refuge at the feet of Pertinax. A short time after- A conspiwards Sosius Falco, one of the confuls of the vented. year, a rash youth 54, but of an ancient and opulent family, liftened to the voice of ambition; and a conspiracy was formed during a short absence of Pertinax, which was crushed by his fudden return to Rome, and his resolute behaviour. Falco was on the point of being justly condemned to death as a public enemy, had he not been faved by the earnest and sincere entreaties of the injured emperor; who conjured the fenate, that the purity of his reign might not be stained by the blood even of a guilty senator.

These disappointments served only to irritate Murder of On the Pertinax by the the rage of the Prætorian guards. twenty-eighth of March, eighty-fix days only Prætoriafter the death of Commodus, a general sedition A.D.193. broke out in the camp, which the officers wanted March 28th. either power or inclination to suppress. Two or three hundred of the most desperate soldiers marched at noon-day, with arms in their hands and fury in their looks, towards the Imperial palace. The gates were thrown open by their companions upon

⁵⁴ If we credit Capitolinus (which is rather difficult), Falco behaved with the most petulant indecency to Pertinax, on the day of his accession. The wife emperor only admonished him of his youth and inexperience. Hift. August. p. 55.

CHAP. guard; and by the domestics of the old court, who had already formed a fecret conspiracy against the life of the too virtuous emperor. On the news of their approach, Pertinax, disdaining either flight or concealment, advanced to meet his affaffins; and recalled to their minds his own innocence, and the fanctity of their recent oath. For a few moments they stood in filent suspense, ashamed of their atrocious design, and awed by the venerable aspect and majestic firmness of their fovereign, till at length the despair of pardon reviving their fury, a barbarian of the country of Tongres 55 levelled the first blow against Pertinax, who was inftantly dispatched with a multitude of wounds. His head separated from his body, and placed on a lance, was carried in triumph to the Prætorian camp, in the fight of a mournful and indignant people, who lamented the unworthy fate of that excellent prince, and the transient bleffings of a reign, the memory of which could ferve only to aggravate their approaching misfortunes 56.

enema.

And the second of the second the

of the second bill bearings of his

⁵⁵ The modern bishopric of Liege. This soldier probably belonged to the Batavian horse-guards, who were mostly raised in the dutchy of Gueldres and the neighbourhood, and were distinguished by their valour, and by the boldness with which they swam their horses across the broadest and most rapid rivers. Tacit. Hist. iv. 12. Dion, l. lv. p. 797. Lipsius de magnitudine Romanâ, l. i. c. 4.

⁵⁶ Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1232. Herodian, l. ii. p. 60. Hist. Auguft. p. 58. Victor in Epitom. & in Cæfarib. Eutropius, viij.

CHAP. V.

Fight of the sept the control of the september of the sep estable materials that beginning

Public Sale of the Empire to Didius Julianus by the Prætorian Guards.—Clodius Albinus in Britain, Pescennius Niger in Syria, and Septimius Severus in Pannonia, declare against the Murderers of Pertinax.—Civil Wars and Victory of Severus over bis three Rivals .- Relaxation of Discipline. -New Maxims of Government.

HE power of the fword is more fensibly CHAP. felt in an extensive monarchy, than in a fmall community. It has been calculated by the Proportion of the miablest politicians, that no state, without being litary foon exhausted, can maintain above the hun-force, to the numdredth part of its members in arms and idleness. ber of the But although this relative proportion may be people. uniform, the influence of the army over the rest of the fociety will vary according to the degree of its positive strength. The advantages of military science and discipline cannot be exerted, unless a proper number of foldiers are united into one body, and actuated by one foul. With a handful of men, fuch an union would be ineffectual; with an unwieldy host, it would be impracticable; and the powers of the machine would be alike destroyed by the extreme minuteness, or the excessive weight, of its springs. To illustrate this observation we need only reflect. that there is no superiority of natural strength, artificial weapons, or acquired skill, which could M 4 enable

CHAP. enable one man to keep in constant subjection one hundred of his fellow-creatures: the tyrant of a fingle town, or a small district, would soon discover that an hundred armed followers were a weak defence against ten thousand peasants or citizens; but an hundred thousand well-disciplined foldiers will command, with despotic sway, ten millions of subjects; and a body of ten or fifteen thousand guards will strike terror into the most numerous populace that ever crowded the streets of an immense capital.

The Prætorian guards.

Their inflitution.

The Prætorian bands, whose licentious fury was the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman empire, scarcely amounted to the last mentioned number 1. They derived their inftitution from Augustus. That crafty tyrant, fenfible that laws might colour, but that arms alone could maintain, his usurped dominion, had gradually formed this powerful body of guards in constant readiness to protect his person, to awe the senate, and either to prevent or to crush the first motions of rebellion. He distinguished these favoured troops by a double pay, and fuperior privileges; but, as their formidable aspect would at once have alarmed and irritated the Roman people, three cohorts only were stationed in the capital; whilst the remainder was dif-

They were originally nine or ten thousand men (for Tacitus and Dion are not agreed upon the subject), divided into as many cohorts. Vitellius increased them to sixteen thousand, and as far as we can learn from inscriptions, they never afterwards funk much below that number. See Lipsius de magnitudine Romana, i. 4.

perfed in the adjacent towns of Italy 2. But CHAP. after fifty years of peace and fervitude, Tiberius ventured on a decisive measure, which for ever Their rivetted the fetters of his country. Under the fair pretences of relieving Italy from the heavy burthen of military quarters, and of introducing a stricter discipline among the guards, he affembled them at Rome, in a permanent camp 3, which was fortified with skilful care 4, and placed

on a commanding fituation 5.

Such formidable fervants are always necessary, Their but often fatal to the throne of despotism. thus introducing the Prætorian guards as it were fidence. into the palace and the senate, the emperors taught them to perceive their own strength, and the weakness of the civil government; to view the vices of their masters with familiar contempt, and to lay aside that reverential awe, which distance only, and mystery, can preserve, towards an imaginary power. In the luxurious idleness of an opulent city, their pride was nourished by the fense of their irrefistible weight; nor was it possible to conceal from them, that the person of the fovereign, the authority of the fenate, the public treasure, and the seat of empire, were all

By and con-

² Sueton, in August. c. 49.

³ Tacit. Annal. iv. 2. Sueton. in Tiber. c. 37. Dion Caffius, 1. lvii. p. 867.

⁴ In the civil war between Vitellius and Vespasian, the Prætorian camp was attacked and defended with all the machines used in the fiege of the best fortified cities. Tacit. Hist. iii. 84.

⁵ Close to the walls of the city, on the broad summit of the Quirinal and Viminal hills. See Nardini Roma Antica, p. 174. Donatus de Roma Antiqua, p. 46.

from these dangerous resections, the sirmest and best established princes were obliged to mix blandishments with commands, rewards with punishments, to flatter their pride, indulge their pleasures, connive at their irregularities, and to purchase their precarious faith by a liberal donative; which, since the elevation of Claudius, was exacted as a legal claim, on the accession of every new emperor 6.

Their specious claims. The advocates of the guards endeavoured to justify by arguments, the power which they afferted by arms; and to maintain that, according to the purest principles of the constitution, their consent was essentially necessary in the appointment of an emperor. The election of consuls, of generals, and of magistrates, however it had been recently usurped by the senate, was the ancient and undoubted right of the Roman people. But where was the Roman people to be found? Not surely amongst the mixed multitude of slaves and strangers that filled the streets of Rome; a service populace, as devoid of spirit as destitute of property. The desenders of the state,

felected

⁶ Claudius, raised by the soldiers to the empire, was the first who gave a donative. He gave quina dena, 120 l. (Sueton. in Claud. c. 10.): when Marcus, with his colleague Lucius Verus, took quiet possession of the throne, he gave vicena, 160 l. to each of the guards. Hist. August. p. 25. (Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1231.) We may form some idea of the amount of these sums, by Hadrian's complaint, that the promotion of a Cæsar had cost him ter millies, two millions and a half sterling.

⁷ Cicero de Legibus, iii. 3. The first book of Livy, and the second of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, shew the authority of the people, even in the election of the kings.

selected from the flower of the Italian youth , CHAP. and trained in the exercise of arms and virtue, were the genuine representatives of the people, and the best entitled to elect the military chief of the republic. These affertions, however defective in reason, became unanswerable, when the fierce Prætorians increased their weight, by throwing, like the barbarian conqueror of Rome, their fwords into the scale?

The Prætorians had violated the fanctity of They offer the empire the throne, by the atrocious murder of Pertinax; to fale. they dishonoured the majesty of it, by their subfequent conduct. The camp was without a leader, for even the præfect Lætus, who had excited the tempest, prudently declined the public indignation. Amidst the wild disorder Sulpicianus, the emperor's father-in-law, and governor of the city, who had been fent to the camp on the first alarm of mutiny, was endeavouring to calm the fury of the multitude, when he was filenced by the clamorous return of the murderers, bearing on a lance the head of Pertinax. Though hiftory has accustomed us to observe every principle and every passion yielding to the imperious dictates of ambition, it is fearcely credible that, in these moments of horror, Sulpicianus should have aspired to ascend a throne polluted with the

⁸ They were originally recruited in Latium, Etruria, and the old colonies (Tacit. Annal. iv. 5.). The emperor Otho compliments their vanity, with the flattering titles of Italiæ Alumni, Romana vere juventus. Tacit. Hift. i. 84.

⁹ In the fiege of Rome by the Gauls. See Livy, v. 48. Plutarch. in Camill. p. 143.

lent a prince. He had already begun to use the only effectual argument, and to treat for the Imperial dignity; but the more prudent of the Prætorians, apprehensive that, in this private contract, they should not obtain a just price for so valuable a commodity, ran out upon the ramparts; and, with a loud voice, proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of to the best bidder by public auction 10.

It is purchased by Julian, A. D. 193. March \$8th.

This infamous offer, the most insolent excess of military licence, diffused an universal grief, shame, and indignation throughout the city. It reached at length the ears of Didius Julianus, a wealthy fenator, who, regardless of the public calamities, was indulging himself in the luxury of the table ". His wife and his daughter, his freedmen and his parafites, eafily convinced him that he deserved the throne, and earnestly conjured him to embrace fo fortunate an opportunity. The vain old man hastened to the Prætorian camp, where Sulpicianus was still in treaty with the guards; and began to bid against him from the foot of the rampart. The unworthy negociation was transacted by faithful emissaries, who passed alternately from one candidate to the other, and acquainted each of them with the

gust. p. 60. Though the three historians agree that it was in fact an auction, Herodian alone affirms, that it was proclaimed as such by the soldiers.

Spartianus foftens the most odious parts of the character and elevation of Julian.

offers of his rival. Sulpicianus had already pro- CHAP. mised a donative of five thousand drachms (above one hundred and fixty pounds) to each foldier; when Julian, eager for the prize, rose at once to the fum of fix thousand two hundred and fifty drachms, or upwards of two hundred pounds sterling. The gates of the camp were instantly thrown open to the purchaser; he was declared emperor, and received an oath of allegiance from the foldiers, who retained humanity enough to stipulate that he should pardon and forget the competition of Sulpicianus.

It was now incumbent on the Prætorians to Julian is fulfil the conditions of the fale. They placed acknow-ledged by their new fovereign, whom they ferved and de- the fenate. spised, in the centre of their ranks, surrounded him on every fide with their shields, and conducted him in close order of battle through the deferted streets of the city. The senate was commanded to affemble; and those who had been the distinguished friends of Pertinax, or the perfonal enemies of Julian, found it necessary to affect a more than common share of satisfaction at this happy revolution 12. After Julian had filled the fenate-house with armed foldiers, he expatiated on the freedom of his election, his own eminent virtues, and his full affurance of the affections of the fenate. The obsequious affembly congratulated their own and the public felicity; engaged their allegiance, and conferred on him all the feveral branches of the Imperial

12 Dion Cassius, at that time prætor, had been a personal enemy to Julian, l. lxxiii. p. 1235.

CHAP. power 13. From the fenate Julian was conducted, by the fame military procession, to take possesfion of the palace. The first objects that struck the palace. his eyes, were the abandoned trunk of Pertinax, and the frugal entertainment prepared for his fupper. The one he viewed with indifference; the other with contempt. A magnificent feast was prepared by his order, and he amused himfelf till a very late hour, with dice, and the performances of Pylades, a celebrated dancer. Yet it was observed, that after the crowd of flatterers dispersed, and left him to darkness, solitude, and terrible reflection, he passed a sleepless night; revolving most probably in his mind his own rash folly, the fate of his virtuous predecessor, and the doubtful and dangerous tenure of an empire, which had not been acquired by merit, but purchased by money 14.

The public difcontent.

ti labi WT 10

ted to a both

de france.

He had reason to tremble. On the throne of the world he found himself without a friend, and even without an adherent. The guards themfelves were ashamed of the prince whom their avarice had perfuaded them to accept; nor was there a citizen who did not consider his elevation with horror, as the last insult on the Roman The nobility, whose conspicuous station and ample possessions exacted the strictest caution. dissembled their sentiments, and met the affect-

¹³ Hift. August. p. 61. We learn from thence one curious circumstance, that the new emperor, whatever had been his birth, was immediately aggregated to the number of Patrician families.

¹⁴ Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1235. Hift. August. p. 61. I have endeavoured to blend into one confistent story the seeming contradictions of the two writers.

ed civility of the emperor with smiles of com- CHAP. placency, and professions of duty. But the people, fecure in their numbers and obscurity, gave a free vent to their passions. The streets and public places of Rome refounded with clamours and imprecations. The enraged multitude affronted the person of Julian, rejected his liberality, and conscious of the impotence of their own refentment, they called aloud on the legions of the frontiers to affert the violated majesty of the Roman empire.

The public discontent was soon diffused from The arthe centre to the frontiers of the empire. The Britain, armies of Britain, of Syria, and of Illyricum, Syria, and Pannonia lamented the death of Pertinax, in whose com- declare apany, or under whose command, they had so lian. often fought and conquered. They received with furprife, with indignation, and perhaps with envy, the extraordinary intelligence, that the Prætorians had disposed of the empire by public auction; and they sternly refused to ratify the ignominious bargain. Their immediate and unanimous revolt was fatal to Julian, but it was fatal at the fame time to the public peace; as the generals of the respective armies, Clodius Albinus, Pescennius Niger, and Septimius Severus, were still more anxious to succeed than to revenge the murdered Pertinax. Their forces were exactly balanced. Each of them was at the head of three legions 25, with a numerous train of auxiliaries; and however different in their

15 Dion, 1. lxxiii. p. 1235.

charac-

AP. characters, they were all foldiers of experience

Clodius Albinus in Britain.

Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain, furpaffed both his competitors in the nobility of his extraction, which he derived from some of the most illustrious names of the old republic 16. But the branch from whence he claimed his descent, was sunk into mean circumstances, and transplanted into a remote province. It is difficult to form a just idea of his true character. Under the philosophic cloak of austerity, he stands accused of concealing most of the vices which degrade human nature 17. But his accusers are those venal writers who adored the fortune of Severus, and trampled on the ashes of an unfuccessful rival. Virtue, or the appearances of virtue, recommended Albinus to the confidence and good opinion of Marcus; and his preserving with the fon the same interest which he had acquired with the father, is a proof at least that he was possessed of a very flexible disposition. The favour of a tyrant does not always suppose a want of merit in the object of it; he may, without intending it, reward a man of worth and ability, or he may find fuch a man useful to his own fervice. It does not appear that Albinus served the son of Marcus, either as the minister of his cruelties, or even as the affociate of his pleafures.

le

Y

ire

The Posthumian and the Cejonian; the former of whom was raised to the consulship in the fifth year after its institution.

¹⁷ Spartianus, in his undigested collections, mixes up all the virtues and all the vices that enter into the human composition, and bestows them on the same object. Such, indeed, are many of the characters in the Augustan History.

Pelecon

He was employed in a distant honourable com- CHAP. mand, when he received a confidential letter from the emperor, acquainting him of the treafonable designs of some discontented generals, and authorizing him to declare himself the guardian and fucceffor of the throne, by affuming the title and enfigns of Cæfar 18. The governor of Britain wifely declined the dangerous honour, which would have marked him for the jealoufy, or involved him in the approaching ruin, of Commodus. He courted power by nobler, or, at leaft, by more specious arts. On a premature report of the death of the emperor, he affembled his troops; and, in an eloquent discourse, deplored the inevitable mischiefs of despotism, described the happiness and glory which their ancestors had enjoyed under the consular government, and declared his firm resolution to reinflate the senate and people in their legal authority. This popular harangue was answered by the loud acclamations of the British legions, and received at Rome with a fecret murmur of applause. Safe in the possession of this little world, and in the command of an army less distinguished indeed for discipline than for numbers and valour 19, Albinus braved the menaces of Commodus, maintained towards Pertinax a stately ambiguous referve, and inflantly declared against

18 Hift. August. p. 80. 84.

¹⁹ Pertinax, who governed Britain a few years before, had been left for dead, in a mutiny of the foldiers. Hift. August. p. 54. Yet they loved and regretted him; admirantibus eam virtutem cui irascebantur.

CHAP, the usurpation of Julian. The convulsions of the capital added new weight to his fentiments, or rather to his professions of patriotism. A regard to decency induced him to decline the lofty titles of Augustus and Emperor; and he imitated perhaps the example of Galba, who, on a fimilar occasion, had styled himself the Lieutenant of the fenate and people 20.

Pescennius Niger in Syria.

Personal merit alone had raised Pescennius Niger from an obscure birth and station, to the government of Syria; a lucrative and important command, which in times of civil confusion gave him a near prospect of the throne. Yet his parts feem to have been better suited to the fecond than to the first rank; he was an unequal rival, though he might have approved himself an excellent lieutenant, to Severus, who afterwards displayed the greatness of his mind by adopting feveral useful institutions from a vanquished enemy 21. In his government, Niger acquired the esteem of the soldiers, and the love of the provincials. His rigid discipline fortified the valour and confirmed the obedience of the former, whilft the voluptuous Syrians were less delighted with the mild firmness of his administration, than with the affability of his manners, and the apparent pleasure with which he attended their frequent and pompous festivals 22. As soon as the intel-

ligence

²⁰ Sueton. in Galb. c. 10.

²¹ Hift. August. p. 76.

Herod. 1. ii. p. 68. The chronicle of John Malah, of Antioch, shews the zealous attachment of his countrymen to these festivals, which at once gratified their superstition, and their love of pleafure.

ligence of the atrocious murder of Pertinax had CHAP. reached Antioch, the wishes of Asia invited Niger to assume the Imperial purple and revenge his death. The legions of the eastern frontier embraced his cause; the opulent but unarmed provinces from the frontiers of Æthiopia 23 to the Hadriatic, cheerfully submitted to his power; and the kings beyond the Tigris and the Euphrates congratulated his election, and offered him their homage and fervices. The mind of Niger was not capable of receiving this fudden tide of fortune; he flattered himself that his acceffion would be undiffurbed by competition, and unstained by civil blood; and whilst he enjoyed the vain pomp of triumph, he neglected to fecure the means of victory. Instead of entering into an effectual negociation with the powerful armies of the west, whose resolution might decide, or at least must balance, the mighty contest; inflead of advancing without delay towards Rome and Italy, where his presence was impatiently expected 24, Niger trifled away in the luxury of Antioch those irretrievable moments which were diligently improved by the decifive activity of Severus 25.

23 A king of Thebes, in Egypt, is mentioned in the Augustan History, as an ally, and, indeed, as a personal friend of Niger. If Spartianus is not, as I strongly suspect, mistaken, he has brought to light a dynasty of tributary princes totally unknown to history.

²⁴ Dion, 1. lxxiii. p. 1238. Herod. 1. ii. p. 67. A verse in every one's mouth at that time, seems to express the general opinion of the three rivals; Optimus est Niger, bonus Afer, pessimus Albus. Hist. August. p. 75.

²⁵ Herodian, 1. ii. p. 71.

Pannonia and Dalmatia.

CHAP. The country of Pannonia and Dalmatia, which occupied the space between the Danube and the Hadriatic, was one of the last and most difficult conquests of the Romans. In the defence of national freedom, two hundred thousand of these barbarians had once appeared in the field, alarmed the declining age of Augustus, and exercised the vigilant prudence of Tiberius at the head of the collected force of the empire 26. The Pannonians yielded at length to the arms and inftitutions of Rome. Their recent subjection, however, the neighbourhood, and even the mixture, of the unconquered tribes, and perhaps the climate, adapted, as it has been observed, to the production of great bodies and flow minds 27, all contributed to preferve fome remains of their original ferocity, and under the tame and uniform countenance of Roman provincials, the hardy features of the natives were still to be difcerned. Their warlike youth afforded an inexhaustible fupply of recruits to the legions flationed on the banks of the Danube, and which, from a perpetual warfare against the Germans and Sarmatians, were deservedly esteemed the best troops in the fervice.

Severus

Septimius The Pannonian army was at this time commanded by Septimius Severus, a native of Africa, who, in the gradual ascent of private honours, had concealed his daring ambition, which was

²⁶ See an account of that memorable war in Velleius Paterculus, ii. 110, &c. who ferved in the army of Tiberius.

²⁷ Such is the reflection of Herodian, l. ii. p. 74. Will the modern Austrians allow the influence?

never diverted from its fleady course by the al- CHAP. lurements of pleasure, the apprehension of danger, or the feelings of humanity 28. On the first news of the murder of Pertinax, he affembled his troops, painted in the most lively colours the crime, the insolence, and the weakness of the Prætorian guards, and animated the legions to arms and to revenge. He concluded (and the peroration was thought extremely eloquent) with promifing every foldier about four hundred pounds; an honourable donative, double in value to the infamous bribe with which Julian had purchased the empire 29. The acclamations of declared the army immediately faluted Severus with the the Pannames of Augustus; Pertinax, and Emperor; nonian leand he thus attained the lofty station to which A. D. 193. he was invited, by conscious merit and a long train of dreams and omens, the fruitful offspring either of his superstition or policy 30.

April13th.

The new candidate for empire faw and improved the peculiar advantage of his fituation. His province extended to the Julian Alps, which

²⁸ In the letter to Albinus, already mentioned, Commodus accuses Severus, as one of the ambitious generals who censured his conduct, and wished to occupy his place. Hist. August. p. 80.

²⁹ Pannonia was too poor to supply such a sum. It was probably promised in the camp, and paid at Rome, after the victory. In fixing the fum, I have adopted the conjecture of Casaubon. See Hist. August. p. 66. Comment. p. 115.

³⁰ Herodian, 1. ii. p. 78. Severus was declared emperor on the banks of the Danube, either at Carnuntum, according to Spartianus (Hist. August. p. 65.), or else at Sabaria, according to Victor. Mr. Hume, in supposing that the birth and dignity of Severus were too much inferior to the Imperial crown, and that he marched in Italy as general only, has not confidered this transaction with his usual accuracy (Essay on the original contract).

Marches into Italy.

CHAP. gave an easy access into Italy; and he remembered the faying of Augustus, That a Pannonian army might in ten days appear in fight of Rome 31. By a celerity proportioned to the greatness of the occasion, he might reasonably hope to revenge Pertinax, punish Julian, and receive the homage of the senate and people, as their lawful emperor, before his competitors, separated from Italy by an immense tract of sea and land, were apprized of his fuccefs, or even of his election. During the whole expedition he fcarcely allowed himself any moments for sleep or food; marching on foot, and in complete armour, at the head of his columns, he infinuated himfelf out the state into the confidence and affection of his troops, pressed their diligence, revived their spirits, animated their hopes, and was well fatisfied to share the hardships of the meanest soldier, whilst he kept in view the infinite superiority of his reward.

Advances towards Rome.

d syrule no

MATERIAL CO.

Elong.

The wretched Julian had expected, and thought himself prepared, to dispute the empire with the governor of Syria; but in the invincible and rapid approach of the Pannonian legions, he faw his inevitable ruin. The hafty arrival of every meffenger increased his just apprehensions. He was fuccessively informed, that Severus had passed the Alps; that the Italian cities, unwilling or unable to oppose his progress, had received him with the warmest professions of joy and duty; that the

THE PART OF THE SAME

important

³¹ Velleius Paterculus, 1. ii. c. 3. We must reckon the march from the nearest verge of Pannonia, and extend the fight of the city as far as two hundred miles.

important place of Ravenna had furrendered CHAP, without refistance, and that the Hadriatic fleet was in the hands of the conqueror. The enemy was now within two hundred and fifty miles of Rome; and every moment diminished the narrow span of life and empire allotted to Julian.

He attempted, however, to prevent, or at least Diffress of to protract, his ruin. He implored the venal Julian. faith of the Prætorians, filled the city with unavailing preparations for war, drew lines round the suburbs, and even strengthened the fortifications of the palace; as if those last intrenchments could be defended without hope of relief against a victorious invader. Fear and shame prevented the guards from deferting his standard; but they trembled at the name of the Pannonian legions, commanded by an experienced general, and accustomed to vanquish the barbarians on the frozen Danube 32. They quitted, with a figh, the pleafures of the baths and theatres, to put on arms, whose use they had almost forgotten, and beneath the weight of which they were oppressed. The unpractifed elephants, whose uncouth appearance, it was hoped, would strike terror into the army of the north, threw their unskilful riders; and the awkward evolutions of the marines, drawn from the fleet of Misenum, were an object of ridicule to the populace; whilst the senate enjoyed,

³² This is not a puerile figure of rhetoric, but an allusion to a real fact recorded by Dion, l. lxxi. p. 1181. It probably happened more than once.

CHAP. with fecret pleasure, the distress and weakness of the usurper 33.

His uncertain conduct. Every motion of Julian betrayed his trembling perplexity. He insisted that Severus should be declared a public enemy by the senate. He intreated that the Pannonian general might be associated to the empire. He sent public ambassadors of consular rank to negociate with his rival; he dispatched private assassins to take away his life. He designed that the Vestal virgins, and all the colleges of priests, in their sacerdotal habits, and bearing before them the sacred pledges of the Roman religion, should advance, in solemn procession, to meet the Pannonian legions; and, at the same time, he vainly tried to interrogate, or to appease, the sates, by magic ceremonies, and unlawful sacrifices 34.

Is deserted by the Prætorians. Severus, who dreaded neither his arms nor his enchantments, guarded himself from the only danger of secret conspiracy, by the faithful attendance of six hundred chosen men, who never quitted his person or their cuirasses, either by night or by day, during the whole march. Advancing with a steady and rapid course, he passed, without difficulty, the defiles of the Appennine, received into his party the troops and ambassadors sent to retard his progress, and made a short halt at Interamnia, about seventy miles from

no furer proof of the military skill of the Romans, than their first furmounting the idle terror, and afterwards discaining the danger-ous use, of elephants in war.

³⁴ Hift, August. p. 62, 63.

Rome. His victory was already fecure; but the CHAP. despair of the Prætorians might have rendered it bloody; and Severus had the laudable ambition of ascending the throne without drawing the fword 35. His emissaries, dispersed in the capital, affured the guards, that provided they would abandon their worthless prince, and the perpetrators of the murder of Pertinax, to the justice of the conqueror, he would no longer confider that melancholy event as the act of the whole body. The faithless Prætorians, whose resistance was fupported only by fullen obstinacy, gladly complied with the easy conditions, seized the greatest part of the affassins, and signified to the fenate, that they no longer defended the cause of Julian. That affembly, convoked by the conful, unanimously acknowledged Severus as lawful emperor, decreed divine honours to Pertinax, and pronounced a sentence of deposition and and condeath against his unfortunate successor. Julian demned and exewas conducted into a private apartment of the cuted by baths of the palace, and beheaded as a common the senate, criminal, after having purchased, with an im- A.D. 193. mense treasure, an anxious and precarious reign of only fixty-fix days 36. The almost incredible expedition of Severus, who, in fo fhort a space of time, conducted a numerous army from the banks of the Danube to those of the Tyber,

³⁵ Victor and Eutropius, viii. 17. mention a combat near the Milvian bridge, the Ponte Molle, unknown to the better and more ancient writers.

³⁶ Dion, l. lxxiii. p. 1240. Herodian, l. ii. p. 83. Hift. August. p. 63.

CHAP, proves at once the plenty of provisions produced by agriculture and commerce, the goodness of the roads, the discipline of the legions, and the indolent subdued temper of the provinces 32.

Difgrace of the Prætorian guards.

> Jest Los Logman

and bas

to layer

the leader. spr. C.R.

. a boot

The first cares of Severus were bestowed on two measures, the one dictated by policy, the other by decency; the revenge, and the honours, due to the memory of Pertinax. Before the new emperor entered Rome, he issued his commands. to the Prætorian guards, directing them to wait his arrival on a large plain near the city, without arms, but in the habits of ceremony, in which they were accustomed to attend their sovereign. He was obeyed by those haughty troops, whose contrition was the effect of their just terrors. A chosen part, of the Illyrian army encompassed them with levelled spears. Incapable of flight or resistance, they expected their fate in silent consternation. Severus mounted the tribunal, sternly reproached them with perfidy and cowardice, dismissed them with ignominy from the trust which they had betrayed, despoiled them of their splendid ornaments, and banished them, on pain of death, to the diffance of an hundred miles from the capital. During the transaction, an-

arrection of Sexency, who, in its thorn although 37 From these sixty-six days, we must first deduct sixteen, as Pertinax was murdered on the 28th of March, and Severus most probably elected on the 13th of April (fee Hift. August. p. 65. and Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 393. Note 7.). We cannot allow less than ten days after his election, to put a numerous army in motion. Forty days remain for this rapid march, and as we may compute about eight hundred miles from Rome to the neighbourhood of Vienna, the army of Severus marched twenty miles every day, without halt or intermission.

other detachment had been fent to feize their C HAB. arms, occupy their camp, and prevent the hafty consequences of their despair 38.

The funeral and confectation of Pertinax was Funeral next folemnized with every circumstance of sad and apomagnificence 39. The fenate, with a melancholy Pertinax. pleasure, performed the last rites to that excellent prince, whom they had loved, and still regretted. The concern of his fuccessor was probably less fincere. He esteemed the virtues of Pertinax, but those virtues would for ever have confined his ambition to a private station. Severus pronounced his funeral oration with studied eloquence, inward satisfaction, and well-acted forrow; and by this pious regard to his memory, convinced the credulous multitude that be alone was worthy to supply his place. Sensible, however, that arms, not ceremonies, must affert his claim to the empire, he left Rome at the end of thirty days, and, without fuffering himself to be elated by this easy victory, prepared to encounter his more formidable rivals.

The uncommon abilities and fortune of Se- success of verus have induced an elegant historian to com- Severus against Nipare him with the first and greatest of the ger, and Cæsars 40. The parallel is, at least, impersect. Albinus. Where shall we find, in the character of Severus, the commanding superiority of foul, the generous clemency, and the various genius, which could

³⁸ Dion (l. lxxiv. p. 1241.). Herodian, l. ii. p. 84.

³⁹ Dion (l. lxxiv. p. 1244.), who affifted at the ceremony as a fenator, gives a most pompous description of it.

⁴º Herodian, 1. iii. p. 112.

E NAP. reconcile and unite the love of pleasure, the thirst of knowledge, and the fire of ambition 41? In one instance only, they may be compared, with some degree of propriety, in the celerity of their motions, and their civil victories. In less than four years 42, Severus subdued the riches of the 193-197. east, and the valour of the west. He vanquished two competitors of reputation and ability, and defeated numerous armies, provided with weapons and discipline equal to his own. In that age, the art of fortification, and the principles of ractics, were well understood by all the Roman generals; and the constant superiority of Severus was that of an artist, who uses the same instruments with more skill and industry than his rivals. I shall not, however, enter into a minute narrative of these military operations; but as the two civil wars against Niger and against Albinus, were almost the same in their conduct, event, and consequences, I shall collect into one point of view, the most striking circumstances, tending to develope the character of the conqueror, and the

Conduct civil wars. state of the empire.

olibuose

Falsehood and infincerity, unsuitable as they of the two feem to the dignity of public transactions, offend

⁴¹ Though it is not, most affuredly, the intention of Lucan, to exalt the character of Cæsar, yet the idea he gives of that hero, in the tenth book of the Pharsalia, where he describes him, at the same time, making love to Cleopatra, fustaining a siege against the power of Egypt, and converfing with the fages of the country, is, in reality, the nobleft panegyric.

[#] Reckoning from his election, April 13, 193, to the death of Albinus, February 19, 197. See Tillemont's Chronology.

us with a less degrading idea of meanness, than CHAP. when they are found in the intercourse of private life. In the latter, they discover a want of courage; in the other, only a defect of power: and, as it is impossible for the most able statesman to fubdue millions of followers and enemies by their own personal strength, the world, under the name of policy, feems to have granted them a very liberal indulgence of craft and diffimulation. Yet Arts of the arts of Severus cannot be justified by the most Severus ample privileges of state reason. He promised only to betray, he flattered only to ruin; and however he might occasionally bind himself by oaths and treaties, his confcience, obsequious to his interest, always released him from the incon-

If his two competitors, reconciled by their towards common danger, had advanced upon him with- Niger; out delay, perhaps Severus would have funk under their united effort. Had they even attacked him, at the same time, with separate views and feparate armies, the contest might have been long and doubtful. But they fell, fingly and fucceffively, an easy prey to the arts as well as arms of their fubtle enemy, lulled into fecurity by the moderation of his professions, and overwhelmed by the rapidity of his action. He first marched against Niger, whose reputation and power he the most dreaded: but he declined any hostile declarations, suppressed the name of his antagonist, and only fignified to the senate and people,

CHAP. his intention of regulating the eastern provinces. In private he spoke of Niger, his old friend and intended successor 44, with the most affectionate regard, and highly applauded his generous defign of revenging the murder of Pertinax. To punish the vile usurper of the throne, was the duty of every Roman general. To persevere in arms, and to refift a lawful emperor, acknowledged by the fenate, would alone render him criminal 45. The fons of Niger had fallen into his hands among the children of the provincial governors, detained at Rome as pledges for the loyalty of their parents 46. As long as the power of Niger inspired terror, or even respect, they were educated with the most tender care, with the children of Severus himself; but they were soon involved in their father's ruin, and removed, first by exile, and afterwards by death, from the eye of public compassion 47. 193 of agentsq .valsb the

towards Albinus.

Whilst Severus was engaged in his eastern war, he had reason to apprehend that the governor of Britain might pass the sea and the Alps, occupy the vacant feat of empire, and oppose his return

⁴⁴ Whilst Severus was very dangerously ill, it was industriously given out, that he intended to appoint Niger and Albinus his fucceffors. As he could not be fincere with respect to both, he might not be fo with regard to either. Yet Severus carried his hypocrify so far, as to profess that intention in the memoirs of his own life.

⁴⁵ Hift. August. p. 65.

⁴⁶ This practice, invented by Commodus, proved very useful to Severus. He found, at Rome, the children of many of the principal adherents of his rivals; and he employed them more than once to intimidate, or feduce, the parents.

⁴⁷ Herodian, 1. iii. p. 96. Hift. August, p. 67, 68.

battles.

with the authority of the senate and the forces of CHAP. the west. The ambiguous conduct of Albinus, in not affuming the Imperial title, left room for negotiation. Forgetting, at once, his professions of patriotism, and the jealousy of sovereign power, he accepted the precarious rank of Cæsar, as a reward for his fatal neutrality. Till the first contest was decided, Severus treated the man, whom he had doomed to destruction, with every mark of efteem and regard. Even in the letter, in which he announced his victory over Niger, he styles Albinus the brother of his foul and empire, fends him the affectionate falutations of his wife Julia, and his young family, and intreats him to preserve the armies and the republic faithful to their common interest. The messengers charged with this letter, were instructed to accost the Cæsar with respect, to desire a private audience, and to plunge their daggers into his heart 48. The conspiracy was discovered, and the too credulous Albinus, at length, passed over to the continent, and prepared for an unequal contest with his rival, who rushed upon him at the head of a veteran and victorious army.

The military labours of Severus feem inade- Event of quate to the importance of his conquests. Two the civil wars, engagements, the one near the Hellespont, the other in the narrow defiles of Cilicia, decided the fate of his Syrian competitor; and the troops of Europe afferted their usual ascendant over the ef-

feminate

⁴⁸ Hift. August. p. 84. Spartianus has inserted this curious let, ter at full length.

CHAP feminate natives of Alia 49. The battle of Lyons, where one hundred and fifty thousand 50 Romans were engaged, was equally fatal to Albinus. The valour of the British army maintained, indeed, a sharp and doubtful contest, with the hardy discipline of the Illyrian legions. The fame and person of Severus appeared, during a few moments, irrecoverably loft, till that warlike prince rallied his fainting troops, and led them on to a decifive victory 51. The war was finished by that memorable day.

decided by one or two battles.

The civil wars of modern Europe have been diffinguished, not only by the fierce animosity, but likewise by the obstinate perseverance, of the contending factions. They have generally been justified by some principle, or, at least, coloured by some pretext, of religion, freedom, or loyalty. The leaders were nobles of independent property and hereditary influence. The troops fought like men interested in the decision of the quarrel; and as military spirit and party zeal were strongly diffused throughout the whole community, a vanquished chief was immediately supplied with new adherents, eager to shed their blood in the same cause. But the Romans, after the fall of the republic, combated only for the choice of mafters.

encarements, the one near the Herlett es

SERVICE L

⁴⁹ Consult the third book of Herodian, and the feventy-fourth book of Dion Caffrus. 50 Dion, 1. lxxv. p. 1266. 101 100 000000 State of the st

⁵¹ Dion, l. lxxv. p. 1261. Herodian, l. iii. p. 110. Hift. August. p. 68. The battle was fought in the plain of Trevoux, three or four leagues from Lyons. See Tillemont, tom. iii. p. 406. Note 18.

Under the standard of a popular candidate for CHAP. empire, a few enlifted from affection, fome from fear, many from interest, none from principle. The legions, uninflamed by party zeal, were allured into civil war by liberal donatives, and still more liberal promises. A defeat, by disabling the chief from the performance of his engagements, disfolved the mercenary allegiance of his followers; and left them to confult their own fafety, by a timely defertion of an unfoccessful cause. It was of little moment to the provinces, under whose name they were oppressed or governed; they were driven by the impulsion of the present power, and as soon as that power vielded to a superior force, they hastened to implore the clemency of the conqueror, who, as he had an immense debt to discharge, was obliged to facrifice the most guilty countries to the avarice of his foldiers. In the vast extent of the Roman empire, there were few fortified cities capable of protecting a routed army; nor was there any person, or family, or order of men, whose natural interest, unsupported by the powers of government, was capable of restoring the cause of a finking party 52.

Yet, in the contest between Niger and Seve- siege of rus, a fingle city deserves an honourable exception. As Byzantium was one of the greatest passages from Europe into Asia, it had been provided with a strong garrison, and a fleet of five

52 Montesquieu, Considerations sur la Grandeur et la Decadence des Romains, c. xii.

VOL. I.

hundred

CHAP. hundred vessels was anchored in the harbour 53. The impetuolity of Severus disappointed this prudent scheme of desence; he lest to his generals the fiege of Byzantium, forced the less guarded passage of the Hellespont, and, impatient of a meaner enemy, pressed forward to encounter his rival. Byzantium, attacked by a numerous and increasing army, and afterwards by the whole naval power of the empire, sustained a fiege of three years, and remained faithful to the name and memory of Niger. The citizens and foldiers (we know not from what cause) were animated with equal fury; feveral of the principal officers of Niger, who despaired of, or who disdained, a pardon, had thrown themselves into this last refuge: the fortifications were esteemed impregnable, and, in the defence of the place, a celebrated engineer displayed all the mechanic powers known to the ancients 54. Byzantium, at length, furrendered to famine. The magistrates and foldiers were put to the fword, the walls demolished, the privileges suppressed, and the destined capital of the east subsisted only as an open village, subject to the insulting jurisdiction of Perinthus. The historian Dion, who had admired the flourishing, and lamented the desolate,

ftate

⁵³ Most of these, as may be supposed, were small open vessels; some, however, were gallies of two, and a few of three ranks of

⁵⁴ The engineer's name was Priscus. His skill faved his life, and he was taken into the service of the conqueror. For the particular facts of the fiege confult Dion Cassius (l. lxxv. p. 1251.), and Herodian (l. iii. p. 95.): for the theory of it, the fanciful chevalier de Folard may be looked into. See Polybe, tom. i. p. 76. beatings

state of Byzantium, accused the revenge of Se- CHAP. verus, for depriving the Roman people of the strongest bulwark against the barbarians of Pontus and Asia 55. The truth of this observation was but too well justified in the succeeding age, when the Gothic fleets covered the Euxine, and paffed through the undefended Bosphorus into the centre of the Mediterranean.

Both Niger and Albinus were discovered and Deaths of put to death in their flight from the field of bat- Albinus. tle. Their fate excited neither furprise nor com- Cruel conpassion. They had staked their lives against the of the civil chance of empire, and suffered what they would wars. have inflicted; nor did Severus claim the arrogant superiority of suffering his rivals to live in a private station. But his unforgiving temper, ftimulated by avarice, indulged a spirit of revenge, where there was no room for apprehen-The most considerable of the provincials, who, without any diflike to the fortunate candidate, had obeyed the governor under whose authority they were accidentally placed, were punished by death, exile, and especially by the confiscation of their estates. Many cities of the east were stript of their ancient honours, and obliged to pay, into the treasury of Severus, four times the amount of the sums contributed by them for the service of Niger 56.

⁵⁵ Notwithstanding the authority of Spartianus and some modern Greeks, we may be affured from Dion and Herodian, that Byzantium, many years after the death of Severus, lay in ruins.

⁵⁶ Dion, 1. lxxiv. p. 1250.

CHAP. Animofity of Severus fenate.

Till the final decision of the war, the cruelty of Severus was, in some measure, restrained by the uncertainty of the event, and his pretended against the reverence for the senate. The head of Albinus. accompanied with a menacing letter, announced to the Romans, that he was refolved to spare none of the adherents of his unfortunate competitors. He was irritated by the just suspicion, that he had never possessed the affections of the fenate, and he concealed his old malevolence under the recent discovery of some treasonable correspondences. Thirty-five senators, however, accused of having favoured the party of Albinus, he freely pardoned; and, by his subsequent behaviour, endeavoured to convince them, that he had forgotten, as well as forgiven, their supposed offences. But, at the same time, he condemned forty-one 57 other fenators, whose names history has recorded; their wives, children, and clients, attended them in death, and the noblest provincials of Spain and Gaul were involved in the same ruin. Such rigid justice, for so he termed it, was, in the opinion of Severus, the only conduct capable of enfuring peace to the people, or stability to the prince; and he condescended slightly to lament, that, to be mild, it was necessary that he should first be cruel 58.

⁵⁷ Dion (l. lxxv. p. 1264.); only 29 fenators are mentioned by him, but 41 are named in the Augustan History, p. 69. among whom were fix of the name of Pescennius. Herodian (L iii. p. 215.) speaks in general of the cruelties of Severus.

⁵⁸ Aurelius Victor.

The true interest of an absolute monarch ge- CHAP. nerally coincides with that of his people. Their numbers, their wealth, their order, and their fecurity, are the best and only foundations of his real greatness; and were he totally devoid of vernment. virtue, prudence might supply its place, and would dictare the same rule of conduct. Severus confidered the Roman empire as his property, and had no fooner fecured the possession, than he bestowed his care on the cultivation and improvement of fo valuable an acquisition. Salutary laws, executed with inflexible firmness, soon corrected most of the abuses with which, since the death of Marcus, every part of the government had been infected. In the administration of justice, the judgments of the emperor were characterized by attention, discernment, and impartiality; and whenever he deviated from the firict line of equity, it was generally in favour of the poor and oppressed; not so much indeed from any sense of humanity, as from the natural propensity of a despot, to humble the pride of greatness, and to fink all his subjects to the same common level of absolute dependence. His expensive taste for building, magnificent shows, and above all a constant and liberal distribution of corn and provisions, were the furest means of captivating the affection of the Roman people 59.

The wifdom and justice of his go-

39 Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1272. Hift. August. p. 67. Severus celebrated the fecular games with extraordinary magnificence, and he left in the public granaries a provision of corn for seven years, at the rate of 75,000 modii, or about 2500 quarters per day. I am

General peace and

· CHAP. The misfortunes of civil discord were obliterated. The calm of peace and prosperity was once more experienced in the provinces; and many cities, prosperity, restored by the munificence of Severus, assumed the title of his colonies, and attested by public monuments their gratitude and felicity 60. The fame of the Roman arms was revived by that warlike and fuccessful emperor 63, and he boasted with a just pride, that, having received the empire oppressed with foreign and domestic wars. he left it established in profound, universal, and honourable peace 62.

of military discipline.

Relaxation Although the wounds of civil war appeared completely healed, its mortal poifon still lurked in the vitals of the conflitution. Severus posfessed a considerable share of vigour and ability; but the daring foul of the first Cæsar, or the deep policy of Augustus, were scarcely equal to the talk of curbing the infolence of the victorious legions. By gratitude, by mifguided policy, by feeming necessity, Severus was induced to relax the nerves of discipline 63. The vanity of his ds, and to fini

> perfuaded, that the granaries of Severus were fupplied for a long term; but I am not less perfuaded, that policy on one hand, and admiration on the other, magnified the hoard far beyond its true f bns dustraes a the dwal.

> 60 See Spanheim's treatife of ancient medals, the inscriptions, and our learned travellers Spon and Wheeler, Shaw, Pocock, &c. who, in Africa, Greece, and Asia, have found more monuments of Se. verus, than of any other Roman emperor what soever.

> 61 He carried his victorious arms to Seleucia and Ctefiphon, the capitals of the Parthian monarchy. I shall have occasion to mention this war in its proper place.

> 62 Etian in Britannis, was his own just and emphatic expression. Hift. August. 73.

63 Herodian, I. iii. p. 115. Hift, August. p. 68.

foldiers

foldiers was flattered with the honour of wearing CHAP. gold rings; their ease was indulged in the permission of living with their wives in the idleness of quarters. He increased their pay beyond the example of former times, and taught them to expect, and foon to claim, extraordinary donatives on every public occasion of danger or festivity. Elated by fuccess, enervated by luxury, and raised above the level of subjects by their dangerous privileges 64, they foon became incapable of military fatigue, oppressive to the country, and impatient of a just subordination. Their officers afferted the superiority of rank by a more profuse and elegant luxury. There is still extant a letter of Severus, lamenting the licentious state of the army, and exhorting one of his generals to begin the necessary reformation from the tribunes themfelves; fince, as he justly observes, the officer who has forfeited the esteem, will never command the obedience, of his foldiers 65. Had the emperor purfued the train of reflection, he would have discovered, that the primary cause of this general corruption might be ascribed, not indeed to the example, but to the pernicious indulgence, however, of the commander in chief.

The Prætorians, who murdered their emperor New estaand fold the empire, had received the just punishment of their treason; but the necessary, Prætorian

blishment guards.

64 Upon the insolence and privileges of the soldiers, the 16th fatire, falfely ascribed to Juvenal, may be consulted; the style and circumstances of it would induce me to believe, that it was composed under the reign of Severus, or that of his son.

65 Hift. August. p. 73.

CHAP. though dangerous, institution of guards, was foon restored on a new model by Severus, and increafed to four times the ancient number 66. Formerly these troops had been recruited in Italy; and as the adjacent provinces gradually imbibed the fofter manners of Rome, the levies were extended to Macedonia, Noricum, and Spain. In the room of these elegant troops, better adapted to the pomp of courts than to the uses of war, it was established by Severus, that from all the legions of the frontiers, the foldiers most distinguished for strength, valour, and fidelity, should be occasionally draughted; and promoted, as an honour and reward, into the more eligible fervice of the guards 67. By this new inftitution, the Italian youth were diverted from the exercise of arms, and the capital was terrified by the strange aspect and manners of a multitude of barbarians. But Severus flattered himself, that the legions would confider these chosen Prætorians as the representatives of the whole military order; and that the present aid of fifty thousand men, superior in arms and appointments to any force that could be brought into the field against them, would for ever crush the hopes of rebellion, and fecure the empire to himself and his posterity.

The office of Præto-rian Præfect,

The command of these savoured and formidable troops foon became the first office of the As the government degenerated into empire. military despotism, the Prætorian Præfect, who

⁶⁶ Herodian, 1. iii. p. 131,

⁶⁷ Dion, l. lxxiv. p. 1243.

in his origin had been a simple captain of the CHAP, guards, was placed, not only at the head of the army, but of the finances, and even of the law. In every department of administration, he reprefented the person, and exercised the authority, of the emperor. The first Præsect who enjoyed and abused this immense power was Plautianus, the favourite minister of Severus. His reign lasted above ten years, till the marriage of his daughter with the eldeft fon of the emperor, which feemed to affure his fortune, proved the occasion of his ruin 68. The animolities of the palace, by irritating the ambition and alarming the fears of Plautianus, threatened to produce a revolution, and obliged the emperor, who still loved him, to confent with reluctance to his death 69. After the fall of Plautianus, an eminent lawyer, the celebrated Papinian, was appointed to execute the motley office of Prætorian Præfect.

Till the reign of Severus, the virtue and even The fenate the good sense of the emperors had been distin- by military guished by their zeal or affected reverence for the despotism. fenate, and by a tender regard to the nice frame of civil policy instituted by Augustus. But the youth of Severus had been trained in the implicit obedience of camps, and his riper years spent in

oppreffed

68 One of his most daring and wanton acts of power, was the castration of an hundred free Romans, some of them married men, and even fathers of families; merely that his daughter, on her marriage with the young emperor, might be attended by a train of eunuchs worthy of an Eastern queen. Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1271.

69 Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1274. Herodian, l. iii. p. 122. 129. The grammarian of Alexandria seems, as it is not unusual, much better acquainted with this mysterious transaction, and more assured of the guilt of Plautianus, than the Roman senator ventures to be.

the

CHAP. the despotism of military command. His haughty and inflexible spirit could not discover, or would not acknowledge, the advantage of preferving an intermediate power, however imaginary, between the emperor and the army. He disdained to profess himself the servant of an affembly that detefted his person and trembled at his frown; he iffued his commands, where his request would have proved as effectual; affumed the conduct and ftyle of a fovereign and a conqueror, and exercifed, without difguife, the whole legislative as well as the executive power.

New maxims of the Imperial prerogative.

ornal sall

belightqu

y 1020 im yel . Michael M.

The victory over the fenate was eafy and inglorious. Every eye and every passion were directed to the fupreme magistrate, who possessed the arms and treasure of the state; whilst the senate, neither elected by the people, nor guarded by military force, nor animated by public spirit, refted its declining authority on the frail and crumbling basis of ancient opinion. The fine theory of a republic infenfibly vanished, and made way for the more natural and substantial feelings of monarchy. As the freedom and honours of Rome were fuccessively communicated to the provinces, in which the old government had been either unknown, or was remembered with abhorrence, the tradition of republican maxims was gradually obliterated. The Greek historians of the age of the Antonines 10 observe, with a malicious pleasure, that although the sovereign of Rome, in compliance with an obfolete prejudice, abstained from the name of king, he possessed the

-lib imp

is theirto

- ara asla

full measure of regal power. In the reign of Se- C HAP. verus, the fenate was filled with polished and eloquent flaves from the eaftern provinces, who juftified personal flattery by speculative principles of fervitude. These new advocates of prerogative were heard with pleasure by the court, and with patience by the people, when they inculcated the duty of passive obedience, and descanted on the inevitable mischiefs of freedom. The lawyers and the historians concurred in teaching, that the Imperial authority was held, not by the delegated commission, but by the irrevocable refignation of the senate; that the emperor was freed from the reftraint of civil laws, could command by his arbitrary will the lives and fortunes of his subjects, and might dispose of the empire as of his private patrimony 71. The most eminent of the civil lawyers, and particularly Papinian, Paulus, and Ulpian, flourished under the house of Severus; and the Roman jurisprudence having closely united itself with the system of monarchy, was fupposed to have attained its full maturity and. perfection.

The contemporaries of Severus, in the enjoyment of the peace and glory of his reign, forgave the cruelties by which it had been introduced. Posterity, who experienced the fatal effects of his maxims and example, justly considered him as the principal author of the decline of the Roman diamateir saddiffed to the vain f empire.

and divination, deculy writed to the l

⁷¹ Dion Cassius seems to have written with no other view, than to form these opinions into an historical system. The Pandects will shew how assiduously the lawyers, on their side, laboured in the cause of prerogative.

CHAP. VI.

The Death of Severus.—Tyranny of Caracalla.—
Usurpation of Macrinus.—Follies of Elagabalus.
—Virtues of Alexander Severus.—Licentiousness of the Army.—General State of the Roman Finances.

Greatness and discontent of Severus.

THE ascent to greatness, however steep and dangerous, may entertain an active spirit with the consciousness and exercise of its own powers; but the possession of a throne could never yet afford a lafting fatisfaction to an ambitious mind. This melancholy truth was felt and acknowledged by Severus. Fortune and merit had, from an humble station, elevated him to the first place among mankind. "He had been all things, as he faid himself, and " all was of little value "." Diffracted with the care, not of acquiring, but of preserving an empire, oppressed with age and infirmities, careless of fame , and satiated with power, all his prospects of life were closed. The defire of perpetuating the greatness of his family, was the only remaining wish of his ambition and paternal tenderness.

His wife the empress Julia. Like most of the Africans, Severus was passionately addicted to the vain studies of magic and divination, deeply versed in the interpreta-

Hift. August. p. 71. "Omnia fui et nihil expedit."

Dien Caffius, l. lxxvi. p. 1284.

tion of dreams and omens, and perfectly acquaint- C HAP. ed with the science of judicial astrology; which, in almost every age, except the present, has maintained its dominion over the mind of man. He had loft his first wife, whilst he was governor of the Lionnese Gaul 3. In the choice of a fecond, he fought only to connect himself with fome favourite of fortune; and as foon as he had discovered that a young lady of Emesa in Syria had a royal nativity, he folicited, and obtained her hand . Julia Domna (for that was her name) deserved all that the stars could promise her. She possessed, even in an advanced age, the attractions of beauty's, and united to a lively imagination, a firmness of mind, and strength of judgment, feldom bestowed on her sex. amiable qualities never made any deep impression on the dark and jealous temper of her husband; but in her fon's reign, the administered the principal affairs of the empire, with a prudence, that supported his authority; and with a moderation, that fometimes corrected his wild extravagancies 6. Julia applied herself to letters and philosophy, with some success, and with the most splendid

About the year 186, M. de Tillemont is miserably embarrassed with a passage of Dion, in which the empress Faustina, who died in the year 175, is introduced as having contributed to the marriage of Severus and Julia (l. lxxiv. p. 1243.). The learned compiler forgot, that Dion is relating, not a real fact, but a dream of Severus; and dreams are circumscribed to no limits of time or space. Did M, de Tillemont imagine that marriages were consummated in the temple of Venus at Rome? Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 389. Note 6.

⁴ Hift. August. p. 65. 5 Hift. August, p. 85.

⁶ Dion Cassius, 1. lxxvii. p. 1304. 1314.

CHAP. reputation. She was the patroness of every art. and the friend of every man of genius?. The grateful flattery of the learned has celebrated her virtues; but, if we may credit the fcandal of ancient history, chastity was very far from being the most conspicuous virtue of the empress Julia sisted of Sentes of vine thought a Min

Their two racalla and Geta.

Two fons, Caracalla o and Geta, were the fruit of this marriage, and the deftined heirs of the empire. The fond hopes of the father, and of the Roman world, were foon disappointed by these vain youths, who displayed the indolent fecurity of hereditary princes; and a prefumption that fortune would supply the place of merit and application. Without any emulation of virtue or talents, they discovered, almost from their infancy, a fixed and implacable antipathy for each other. Their aversion, confirmed by years, and fomented by the arts of their interested favourites, broke out in childish, and gradually in more ferious, competitions; and at length divided the theatre, the circus, and the court, into two factions; actuated by the hopes and fears of their respective leaders. The prudent emperor endeavoured, by every expedient of advice and

Their mutual averfion to each other.

⁷ See a Differtation of Menage, at the end of his edition of Diogenes Laertius, de Fœminis Philosophis.

⁸ Dion, I. lxxvi. p. 1285. Aurelius Victor.

⁹ Baffianus was his first name, as it had been that of his maternal grandfather. During his reign he assumed the appellation of Antoninus, which is employed by lawyers and ancient historians. After his death, the public indignation loaded him with the nick-names of Tarantus and Caracalla. The first was borrowed from a celebrated Gladiator, the second from a long Gallic gown which he distributed to the people of Rome.

authority, to allay this growing animofity. The CHAP. unhappy difcord of his fons clouded all his profpects, and threatened to overturn a throne raised with fo much labour, cemented with fo much blood, and guarded with every defence of arms and treasure. With an impartial hand he maintained between them an exact balance of favour, conferred on both the rank of Augustus, with the revered name of Antoninus; and for the first time the Roman world beheld three emperors 10. Three em-Yet even this equal conduct ferved only to inflame the contest, whilst the fierce Caracalla afferted the right of primogeniture, and the milder Geta courted the affections of the people and the foldiers. In the anguish of a disappointed father, Severus foretold, that the weaker of his fons would fall a facrifice to the stronger; who, in his turn, would be ruined by his own vices ".

In these circumstances the intelligence of a war The Calein Britain, and of an invalion of the province donian by the barbarians of the North, was received A.D.208. with pleasure by Severus. Though the vigilance of his lieutenants might have been sufficient to repel the diftant enemy, he refolved to embrace the honourable pretext of withdrawing his fons from the luxury of Rome, which enervated their minds and irritated their passions; and of inuring their youth to the toils of war and government. Notwithstanding his advanced age (for

¹⁰ The elevation of Caracalla is fixed by the accurate M. de Tillemont to the year 198: the affociation of Geta to the year 208.

¹¹ Herodian, l. iii. p. 130. The lives of Caracalla and Geta, in the Augustan History.

CHAP. he was above three-score), and his gout, which obliged him to be carried in a litter, he transported himself in person into that remote island, attended by his two fons, his whole court, and a formidable army. He immediately passed the walls of Hadrian and Antoninus, and entered the enemy's country, with a defign of completing the long attempted conquest of Britain. He penetrated to the northern extremity of the island. without meeting an enemy. But the concealed ambufcades of the Caledonians, who hung unfeen on the rear and flanks of his army, the coldness of the climate, and the severity of a winter march across the hills and moraffes of Scotland, are reported to have cost the Romans above fifty thousand men. The Caledonians at length yielded to the powerful and obstinate attack, fued for peace, and furrendered a part of their arms, and a large tract of territory. But their apparent submission lasted no longer than the present terror. As foon as the Roman legions had retired, they refumed their hoffile independence. Their restless spirit provoked Severus to fend a new army into Caledonia, with the most bloody orders, not to subdue but to extirpare the natives. They were faved by the death of their haughty enemy "2.

Fingal and his heroes.

This Caledonian war, neither marked by decifive events, nor attended with any important consequences, would ill deserve our attention; but it is supposed, not without a considerable

¹² Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1280, &c. Herodian, l. iii. p. 132, &c.

degree of probability, that the invasion of Seve- CHAP. rus is connected with the most shining period of the British history or fable. Fingal, whose fame, with that of his heroes and bards, has been revived in our language by a recent publication, is faid to have commanded the Caledonians in that memorable juncture, to have eluded the power of Severus, and to have obtained a fignal victory on the banks of the Carun, in which the fon of the King of the World, Caracul, fled from his arms along the fields of his pride 13. Something of a doubtful mist still hangs over these Highland traditions; nor can it be entirely dispelled by the most ingenious researches of modern criticism ": but if we could, with safety, indulge Contrast of the pleasing supposition, that Fingal lived, and the Calethat Ossian sung, the striking contrast of the and the Romans. fituation and manners of the contending nations might amuse a philosophic mind. The parallel would be little to the advantage of the more civilized people, if we compared the unrelenting revenge of Severus with the generous clemency of Fingal; the timid and brutal cruelty of Cara-

33 Offian's Poems, vol. i. p. 175.

Vol. I.

calla,

¹⁴ That the Caracul of Offian is the Caracalla of the Roman Hiftory, is, perhaps, the only point of British antiquity in which Mr. Macpherson and Mr. Whitaker are of the same opinion; and yet the opinion is not without difficulty. In the Caledonian war, the fon of Severus was known only by the appellation of Antoninus : and it may feem strange, that the Highland bard should describe him by a nick-name, invented four years afterwards, scarcely used by the Romans till after the death of that emperor, and feldom employed by the most ancient historians. See Dion, 1. lxxvii. p. 1317. Hist. August. p. 89. Aurel. Victor. Euseb. in Chron, ad ann. 214.

CHAP. calla, with the bravery, the tenderness, the elegant genius of Oslian; the mercenary chiefs who, from motives of fear or interest, served under the Imperial standard, with the freeborn warriors who flarted to arms at the voice of the king of Morven; if, in a word, we contemplated the untutored Caledonians, glowing with the warm virtues of nature, and the degenerate Romans, polluted with the mean vices of wealth and fla-Also of the World, Caraguit, Bed ignov

Ambition of Caracalla.

and street ·-WO

Still

but has i emanod

The declining health and last illness of Severus inflamed the wild ambition and black paffions of Caracalla's foul. Impatient of any delay or division of empire, he attempted, more than once, to shorten the fmall remainder of his father's days, and endeavoured, but without fuccess, to excite a mutiny among the troops 35. The old emperor had often cenfured the misguided lenity of Marcus, who, by a fingle act of justice, might have faved the Romans from the tyranny of his worthless son. Placed in the same situation, he experienced how eafily the rigour of a judge diffolves away in the tenderness of a parent. He deliberated, he threatened, but he could not punish; and this last and only instance of mercy, was more fatal to the empire than a long feries of cruelty 16. The diforder of his mind irritated the pains of his body; he wished impatiently for death, and hastened the instant of it by his impatience. He expired at York in

Death of Severus, and accesfion of his two fons. A.D 4th February.

is Dion, I. lxxvi. p. 1282. Hift. August. p. 71. Aurel. Vic-

¹⁶ Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1283. Hift. August. p. 89.

the fixty-fifth year of his life, and in the eigh- CHAP. teenth of a glorious and successful reign. In his last moments he recommended concord to his fons, and his fons to the army. The falutary advice never reached the heart, or even the understanding, of the impetuous youths; but the more obedient troops, mindful of their oath of allegiance, and of the authority of their deceased master, resisted the folicitations of Caracalla, and proclaimed both brothers emperors of Rome. The new princes foon left the Caledonians in peace, returned to the capital, celebrated their father's funeral with divine honours, and were cheerfully acknowledged as lawful fovereigns, by the fenate, the people, and the provinces. Some pre-eminence of rank feems to have been allowed to the elder brother; but they both administered the empire with equal and independent power 17.

Such a divided form of government would have Jealousy proved a source of discord between the most of the two affectionate brothers. It was impossible that it emperors. could long fubfift between two implacable enemies, who neither desired nor could trust a reconciliation. It was visible that one only could reign, and that the other must fall; and each of them judging of his rival's defigns by his own, guarded his life with the most jealous vigilance from the repeated attacks of poison or the sword. Their rapid journey through Gaul and Italy,

¹⁷ Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1284. Herodian, l. iii. p. 135.

CHAP. during which they never eat at the fame table, or slept in the same house, displayed to the provinces the odious spectacle of fraternal discord. On their arrival at Rome, they immediately divided the vast extent of the Imperial palace 18. No communication was allowed between their apartments; the doors and paffages were diligently fortified, and guards posted and relieved with the same strictness as in a besieged place. The emperors met only in public, in the prefence of their afflicted mother; and each furrounded by a numerous train of armed followers. Even on these occasions of ceremony, the diffimulation of courts could ill difguise the rancour of their hearts 19.

Fruitless negociation for dividing the empire between them.

This latent civil war already distracted the whole government, when a scheme was suggested that seemed of mutual benefit to the hostile bro-

18 Mr. Hume is justly surprised at a passage of Herodian (l. iv. p. 139.), who, on this occasion, represents the Imperial palace, as equal in extent to the rest of Rome. The whole region of the Palatine Mount on which it was built, occupied, at most, a circumference of eleven or twelve thousand feet (See the Notitia and Victor, in Nardini's Roma Antica). But we should recollect that the opulent fenators had almost furrounded the city with their extensive gardens and fuburb palaces, the greatest part of which had been gradually confiscated by the emperors. If Geta resided in the gardens that bore his name on the Janiculum; and if Caracalla inhabited the gardens of Mæcenas on the Esqueline, the rival brothers were separated from each other by the distance of several miles; and yet the intermediate space was filled by the Imperial gardens of Sallust, of Lucullus, of Agrippa, of Domitian, of Caius, &c. all skirting round the city, and all connected with each other, and with the palace, by bridges thrown over the Tiber and the streets. But this explanation of Herodian would require, though it ill deserves, a particular differtation, illustrated by a map of ancient Rome.

19 Herodian, l. iv. p. 139.

thers. It was proposed, that fince it was im- CHAP. possible to reconcile their minds, they should feparate their interest, and divide the empire between them. The conditions of the treaty were already drawn with fome accuracy. It was agreed, that Caracalla, as the elder brother, should remain in possession of Europe and the western Africa; and that he should relinquish the fovereignty of Asia and Egypt to Geta, who might fix his residence at Alexandria or Antioch, cities little inferior to Rome itself in wealth and greatness; that numerous armies should be constantly encamped on either side of the Thracian Bosphorus, to guard the frontiers of the rival monarchies; and that the fenators of European extraction should acknowledge the sovereign of Rome, whilst the natives of Asia followed the emperor of the East. The tears of the empress Julia interrupted the negociation, the first idea of which had filled every Roman breast with furprise and indignation. The mighty mass of conquest was so intimately united by the hand of time and policy, that it required the most forcible violence to rend it afunder. The Romans had reason to dread, that the disjointed members would foon be reduced by a civil war under the dominion of one master; but if the separation was permanent, the division of the provinces must terminate in the dissolution of an empire whose unity had hitherto remained inviolate 20.

20 Herodian, l. iv. p. 144.

Murder of Geta.
A. D.212.
27th February.

Had the treaty been carried into execution, the fovereign of Europe might foon have been the conqueror of Afia; but Caracalla obtained an easier though a more guilty victory. He artfully listened to his mother's entreaties, and confented to meet his brother in her apartment, on terms of peace and reconciliation. In the midst of their conversation, some centurions, who had contrived to conceal themselves, rushed with drawn swords upon the unfortunate Geta. His distracted mother strove to protect him in her arms; but, in the unavailing struggle, she was wounded in the hand, and covered with the blood of her younger fon, while she saw the elder animating and affifting 24 the fury of the affaffins. As foon as the deed was perpetrated, Caracalla, with hafty steps, and horror in his countenance, ran towards the Prætorian camp as his only refuge, and threw himself on the ground before the statues of the tutelar deities 22. The foldiers attempted to raise and comfort him. In broken and disordered words he informed them of his imminent danger and fortunate escape; infinuating that he had prevented the defigns of his enemy, and declared his resolution to live and die with his faith-

21 Caracalla confecrated, in the temple of Serapis, the fword, with which, as he boasted, he had slain his brother Geta. Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1307.

Herodian, l. iv. p. 147. In every Roman camp there was a small chapel near the head-quarters, in which the statues of the tutelar deities were preserved and adored; and we may remark, that the eagles, and other military ensigns, were in the first rank of these deities: an excellent institution, which confirmed discipline by the sanction of religion. See Lipsius de Militia Romana, iv. 5.

ful troops. Geta had been the favourite of the CHAP. foldiers; but complaint was useless, revenge was dangerous, and they still reverenced the fon of Severus. Their discontent died away in idle murmurs, and Caracalla foon convinced them of the justice of his cause, by distributing in one lavish donative the accumulated treasures of his father's reign 23. The real sentiments of the soldiers alone were of importance to his power or fafety. Their declaration in his favour, commanded the dutiful professions of the senate. The obsequious assembly was always prepared to ratify the decision of fortune; but as Caracalla wished to affuage the first emotions of public indignation, the name of Geta was mentioned with decency, and he received the funeral honours of a Roman emperor 24. Posterity, in pity to his misfortune, has cast a veil over his vices. We confider that young prince as the innocent victim of his brother's ambition, without recollecting that he himself wanted power, rather than inclination, to confummate the same attempts of revenge and murder.

The crime went not unpunished. Neither Remorfe business, nor pleasure, nor flattery, could defend Caracalla from the stings of a guilty conscience; and he confessed, in the anguish of a tortured mind, that his disordered fancy often beheld the angry forms of his father and his brother rifing

ty of Cara-

²³ Herodian, l. iv. p. 148. Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1289.

²⁴ Geta was placed among the gods. Sit divus, dum non fit vivus, faid his brother. Hift. August. p. 91, Some marks of Geta's confecration are still found upon medals.

CHAP. into life, to threaten and upbraid him 23. The consciousness of his crime should have induced him to convince mankind, by the virtues of his reign, that the bloody deed had been the involuntary effect of fatal necessity. But the repentance of Caracalla only prompted him to remove from the world whatever could remind him of his guilt, or recal the memory of his murdered brother. On his return from the fenate to the palace, he found his mother in the company of feveral noble matrons, weeping over the untimely fate of her younger son. The jealous emperor threatened them with instant death; the sentence was executed against Fadilla, the last remaining daughter of the emperor Marcus; and even the afflicted Julia was obliged to filence her lamentations, to suppress her sighs, and to receive the affaffin with smiles of joy and approbation. It was computed that, under the vague appellation of the friends of Geta, above twenty thousand persons of both sexes suffered death. His guards and freedmen, the ministers of his serious business, and the companions of his looser hours, those who by his interest had been promoted to any commands in the army or provinces, with the long-connected chain of their dependents, were included in the profcription; which endeavoured to reach every one who had maintained the fmallest correspondence with Geta, who lamented his death, or who even mentioned his name 26. Helvius

⁴⁵ Dion, 1. lxxvii. p. 1307.

¹⁶ Dion, 1. lxxvii. p. 1290. Herodian, 1. iv. p. 150. Dion (p. 1298.) fays, that the comic-poets no longer durst employ the name

Helvius Pertinax, fon to the prince of that name, CHAP. lost his life by an unseasonable witticism 27. It was a sufficient crime of Thrasea Priscus, to be descended from a family in which the love of liberty seemed an hereditary quality 28. The particular causes of calumny and suspicion were at length exhausted; and when a senator was accused of being a secret enemy to the government, the emperor was fatisfied with the general proof that he was a man of property and virtue. From this well-grounded principle he frequently drew the most bloody inferences.

The execution of fo many innocent citizens Death of was bewailed by the fecret tears of their friends Papinian, and families. The death of Papinian, the Prætorian præfect, was lamented as a public calamity. During the last seven years of Severus. he had exercised the most important offices of the state, and, by his falutary influence, guided the emperor's steps in the paths of justice and moderation. In full affurance of his virtues and abilities, Severus, on his death-bed, had conjured him to watch over the prosperity and union

name of Geta in their plays, and that the estates of those who mentioned it in their testaments, were confiscated.

27 Caracalla had affumed the names of several conquered nations; Pertinax observed, that the name of Geticus (he had obtained some advantage of the Goths or Getæ) would be a proper addition to Parthicus, Alemannicus, &c. Hist. August. p. 89.

28 Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1291. He was probably descended from Helvidius Priscus, and Thrasea Pætus, those patriots whose firm, but useless and unseasonable virtue, has been immortalized by Tacitus.

CHAP. of the Imperial family 29. The honest labours of Papinian ferved only to inflame the hatred which Caracalla had already conceived against his father's minister. After the murder of Geta, the Præfect was commanded to exert the powers of his skill and eloquence in a studied apology for that atrocious deed. The philosophic Seneca had condescended to compose a similar epistle to the fenate, in the name of the fon and affaffin of Agrippina 30; "That it was easier to commit " than to justify a parricide," was the glorious reply of Papinian 31, who did not hesitate between the loss of life and that of honour. Such intrepid virtue, which had escaped pure and unfullied from the intrigues of courts, the habits of business, and the arts of his profession, reflects more lustre on the memory of Papinian, than all his great employments, his numerous writings, and the fuperior reputation as a lawyer, which he has preferved through every age of the Roman jurisprudence 32.

His tyranny extended over the pire.

It had hitherto been the peculiar felicity of the Romans, and in the worst of times their conwhole em- folation, that the virtue of the emperors was active, and their vice indolent. Augustus, Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus, visited their extenfive dominions in person, and their progress was marked by acts of wisdom and beneficence.

²⁹ It is said that Papinian was himself a relation of the empress

³⁰ Tacit. Annal. xiv. ii. 31 Hift. August. p. 88.

³² With regard to Papinian, fee Heineccius's Historia Juris Romani, 1. 330, &c.

The tyranny of Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian, CHAP. who refided almost constantly at Rome, or in the adjacent villas, was confined to the fenatorial and equestrian orders 33. But Caracalla was the common enemy of mankind. He left the capital (and he never returned to it) about a year A.D.2134 after the murder of Geta. The rest of his reign was spent in the several provinces of the empire, particularly those of the East, and every province was by turns the scene of his rapine and cruelty. The fenators, compelled by fear to attend his capricious motions, were obliged to provide daily entertainments at an immense expence, which he abandoned with contempt to his guards; and to erect, in every city, magnificent palaces and theatres, which he either disdained to visit, or ordered to be immediately. thrown down. The most wealthy families were ruined by partial fines and confiscations, and the great body of his subjects oppressed by ingenious and aggravated taxes 34. In the midft of peace, and upon the flightest provocation, he issued his commands, at Alexandria in Egypt, for a general massacre. From a secure post in the temple of Serapis, he viewed and directed the slaughter of many thousand citizens, as well as strangers, without diftinguishing either the number or the crime of the fufferers; fince, as he coolly inform-

³³ Tiberius and Domitian never moved from the neighbourhood of Rome. Nero made a short journey into Greece. "Et laudatorum Principum usus ex æquo quamvis procul agentibus. Sævi proximis ingruunt." Tacit. Hist, iv. 75.

³⁴ Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1294.

CHAP. ed the senate, all the Alexandrians, those who had perished and those who had escaped, were alike guilty 35.

Relaxation of discipline.

The wife instructions of Severus never made any lasting impression on the mind of his son, who, although not destitute of imagination and eloquence, was equally devoid of judgment and humanity 36. One dangerous maxim, worthy of a tyrant, was remembered and abused by Caracalla, "To fecure the affections of the army, " and to esteem the rest of his subjects as of lit-"tle moment 37." But the liberality of the father had been restrained by prudence, and his indulgence to the troops was tempered by firmness and authority. The careless profusion of the fon was the policy of one reign, and the inevitable ruin both of the army and of the empire. The vigour of the foldiers, instead of being confirmed by the severe discipline of camps, melted away in the luxury of cities. The exceffive increase of their pay and donatives 38 exhaust-

³⁵ Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1307. Herodian, l. iv. p. 158. The former represents it as a cruel maffacre, the latter as a perfidious one too. It feems probable, that the Alexandrians had irritated the tyrant by their railleries, and perhaps by their tumults.

³⁶ Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1296.

³⁷ Dion, l. lxxvi. p. 1284. Mr. Wotton (Hift. of Rome, p. 330.) fuspects that this maxim was invented by Caracalla himself, and attributed to his father.

³⁸ Dion (1. lxxviii. p. 1343.) informs us, that the extraordinary gifts of Caracalla to the army amounted annually to seventy miltions of drachmæ (about two millions three hundred and fifty thoufand pounds). There is another passage in Dion, concerning the military pay, infinitely curious; were it not obscure, imperfect, and probably corrupt. The best sense seems to be, that the Prætorian guards

ed the state to enrich the military order, whose CHAP. modesty in peace, and service in war, is best fecured by an honourable poverty. The demeanor of Caracalla was haughty and full of pride; but with the troops he forgot even the proper dignity of his rank, encouraged their infolent familiarity, and, neglecting the effential duties of a general, affected to imitate the dress and manners of a common foldier.

It was impossible that such a character, and Murder of fuch a conduct as that of Caracalla, could inspire. A. D. 217. either love or esteem; but as long as his vices 8thMarch. were beneficial to the armies, he was fecure from the danger of rebellion. A fecret conspiracy, provoked by his own jealoufy, was fatal to the tyrant. The Prætorian præfecture was divided between two ministers. The military department was intrusted to Adventus, an experienced rather than an able foldier; and the civil affairs were transacted by Opilius Macrinus, who, by his dexterity in business, had raised himself, with a fair character, to that high office. But his favour varied with the caprice of the emperor, and his life might depend on the flightest fuspicion, or the most casual circumstance. Malice or fanaticism had suggested to an African, deeply

guards received twelve hundred and fifty drachmæ (forty pounds) a year (Dion, 1. lxxvii. p. 1307.). Under the reign of Augustus, they were paid at the rate of two drachmæ, or denarii, per day, 720 a year (Tacit. Annal. i. 17.). Domitian, who increased the foldiers pay one fourth, must have raised the Prætorians to 960 drachmæ (Gronovius de Pecunia Veteri, l. iii. c. 2.). These successive augmentations ruined the empire, for, with the foldiers pay, their numbers too were increased. We have seen the Prætorians alone increased from 10,000 to 50,000 men.

skilled

CHAP. skilled in the knowledge of futurity, a very dangerous prediction, that Macrinus and his fon were deftined to reign over the empire. The report was foon diffused through the province; and when the man was fent in chains to Rome, he still afferted, in the presence of the Præfect of the city, the faith of his prophecy. That mabiffrate, who had received the most pressing instructions to inform himself of the successors of Caracalla, immediately communicated the examination of the African to the Imperial court, which at that time resided in Syria. But, notwithflanding the diligence of the public messengers, a friend of Macrinus found means to apprize him of the approaching danger. The emperor received the letters from Rome; and as he was then engaged in the conduct of a chariot race, he delivered them unopened to the Prætorian Præfect, directing him to dispatch the ordinary affairs, and to report the more important business that might be contained in them. Macrinus read his fate, and resolved to prevent it. He inflamed the discontents of some inferior officers, and employed the hand of Martialis, a desperate foldier, who had been refused the rank of centurion. The devotion of Caracalla prompted him to make a pilgrimage from Edessa to the celebrated temple of the Moon at Carrhæ. He was attended by a body of cavalry; but having stopped on the road for some necessary occasion, his guards preserved a respectful distance, and Martialis approaching his person under a pretence of duty, stabbed him with a dagger. The bold affaffin

affassin was instantly killed by a Scythian archer CHAP. of the Imperial guard. Such was the end of a monster whose life disgraced human nature, and whose reign accused the patience of the Romans 39. The grateful foldiers forgot his vices, remembered only his partial liberality, and obliged the fenate to prostitute their own dignity and that of religion by granting him a place among the gods. Whilft he was upon earth, Alexan- Imitation der the Great was the only hero whom this god ander. deemed worthy his admiration. He assumed the name and enligns of Alexander, formed a Macedonian phalanx of guards, persecuted the difciples of Aristotle, and displayed with a puerile enthusiasm the only sentiment by which he discovered any regard for virtue or glory. We can easily conceive, that after the battle of Narva, and the conquest of Poland, Charles the Twelfth (though he ftill wanted the more elegant accomplishments of the son of Philip) might boast of having rivalled his valour and magnanimity: but in no one action of his life did Caracalla express the faintest resemblance of the Macedonian hero, except in the murder of a great number of his own and of his father's friends *.

After the extinction of the house of Severus, Election the Roman world remained three days without a and character of

Macrinus.

master.

³⁹ Dion, 1. lxxviii. p. 1312. Herodian, 1. iv. p. 168.

⁴⁰ The fondness of Caracalla for the name and ensigns of Alexander, is still preserved on the medals of that emperor. See Spanheim, de Usu Numismatum, Dissertat. xii. Herodian (l. iv. p. 154.) had feen very ridiculous pictures, in which a figure was drawn, with one fide of the face like Alexander, and the other like Caracalla.

CHAP mafter. The choice of the army (for the author rity of a distant and feeble senate was little regarded) hung in an anxious suspense; as no candidate presented himself whose distinguished birth and merit could engage their attachment and unite their fuffrages. The decifive weight of the Prætorian guards elevated the hopes of their præfects, and these powerful ministers began to affert their legal claim to fill the vacancy of the Imperial throne. Adventus, however, the fenior præfect, conscious of his age and infirmities, of his small reputation, and his smaller abilities, refigned the dangerous honour to the crafty ambition of his colleague Macrinus, whose well-diffembled grief removed all fuspicion of his being accessary to his master's death 41. The troops neither loved nor esteemed his character. They cast their eyes around in search of a competitor and at last yielded with reluctance to his promises of unbounded liberality and indulgence.

March 11.

A.D.217. A short time after his accession, he conferred on his fon Diadumenianus, at the age of only ten years, the Imperial title and the popular name of Antoninus. The beautiful figure of the youth, affifted by an additional donative, for which the ceremony furnished a pretext, might attract, it was hoped, the favour of the army, and fecure the doubtful throne of Macrinus.

Discontent of the fenate,

The authority of the new fovereign had been ratified by the cheerful submission of the senate and provinces. They exulted in their unexpect-

41 Herodian, l. iv. p. 169. Hist. August. p. 94.

ed

C

fi

th

ex

g

th

th

po

wi

fer

tha

be

to

fto

dece

toria

the ' of P

The

præf

tune

narro

and I diato fary,

learn

ed deliverance from a hated tyrant, and it seemed CHAP. of little consequence to examine into the virtues of the successor of Caracalla. But as soon as the first transports of joy and surprise had subsided, they began to scrutinize the merits of Macrinus with a critical feverity, and to arraign the hafty choice of the army. It had hitherto been confidered as a fundamental maxim of the constitution, that the emperor must be always chosen in the fenate, and the fovereign power, no longer exercifed by the whole body, was always delegated to one of its members. But Macrinus was not a fenator 42. The fudden elevation of the Prætorian præfects betrayed the meanness of their origin; and the equestrian order was still in possession of that great office, which commanded with arbitrary fway the lives and fortunes of the fenate. A murmur of indignation was heard, that a man whose obscure 43 extraction had never been illustrated by any fignal fervice, should dare to invest himself with the purple, instead of bestowing it on some distinguished senator, equal

42 Dion, 1. lxxxviii. p. 1350. Elagabalus reproached his predecessor, with daring to seat himself on the throne; though, as Prætorian Præsect, he could not have been admitted into the senate after the voice of the cryer had cleared the house. The personal favour of Plautianus and Sejanus had broke through the established rule. They rose indeed from the equestrian order; but they preserved the præsecture with the rank of senator, and even with the consulship.

43 He was a native of Cæsarea, in Numidia, and began his fortune by serving in the household of Plautian, from whose ruin he narrowly escaped. His enemies afferted, that he was born a slave, and had exercised, among other infamous professions, that of Gladiator. The fashion of aspersing the birth and condition of an adversary, seems to have lasted from the time of the Greek orators, to the learned grammarians of the last age.

CHAP. in birth and dignity to the splendour of the Imperial station. As soon as the character of Macrinus was furveyed by the sharp eye of discontent, some vices, and many defects, were easily discovered. The choice of his ministers was in many inftances juftly cenfured, and the diffatisfied people, with their usual candour, accused at once his indolent tameness and his excessive severity 44.

and the army.

His rash ambition had climbed a height where it was difficult to stand with firmness, and impossible to fall without instant destruction. Trained in the arts of courts and the forms of civil business, he trembled in the presence of the fierce and undisciplined multitude, over whom he had assumed the command; his military talents were despised, and his personal courage suspected; a whifper that circulated in the camp, disclosed the fatal fecret of the conspiracy against the late emperor, aggravated the guilt of murder by the baseness of hypocrify, and heightened contempt by detestation. To alienate the foldiers, and to provoke inevitable ruln, the character of a reformer was only wanting: and fuch was the peculiar hardship of his fate, that Macrinus was compelled to exercise that invidious office. prodigality of Caracalla had left behind it a long train of ruin and disorder; and if that worthless

⁴⁴ Both Dion and Herodian speak of the virtues and vices of Macrinus, with candour and impartiality; but the author of his life, in the Augustan History, seems to have implicitly copied some of the venal writers, employed by Elagabalus, to blacken the memory of his predecessor.

tyrant had been capable of reflecting on the fure CHAP. consequences of his own conduct, he would perhaps have enjoyed the dark prospect of the distress and calamities which he bequeathed to his fucceffors.

In the management of this necessary reforma- Macrinus tion, Macrinus proceeded with a cautious pru- attempts a dence, which would have restored health and tion of the vigour to the Roman army, in an easy and almost imperceptible manner. To the foldiers already engaged in the fervice, he was constrained to leave the dangerous privileges and extravagant pay given by Caracalla; but the new recruits were received on the more moderate though liberal establishment of Severus, and gradually formed to modefty and obedience 45. One fatal error destroyed the falutary effects of this judicious plan. The numerous army, affembled in the East by the late emperor, instead of being immediately dispersed by Macrinus through the feveral provinces, was fuffered to remain united in Syria, during the winter that followed his elevation. In the luxurious idleness of their quarters, the troops viewed their strength and numbers, communicated their complaints, and revolved in their minds the advantages of another revolution. The veterans, instead of being flattered by the advantageous distinction, were alarm-

ed by the first steps of the emperor, which they

⁴⁵ Dion, 1. lxxxiii. p. 1336. The sense of the author is as clear as the intention of the emperor; but M. Wotton has mistaken both, by understanding the distinction, not of veterans and recruits, but of old and new legions. History of Rome, p. 347.

a andministra

s -annedter

tion of the ,不是四点

CHAP. confidered as the prefage of his future intentions. The recruits, with sullen reluctance, entered on a service, whose labours were increased while its rewards were diminished by a covetous and unwarlike fovereign. The murmurs of the army swelled with impunity into feditious clamours; and the partial mutinies betrayed a spirit of difcontent and disaffection, that waited only for the flightest occasion to break out on every side into a general rebellion. To minds thus disposed, the occasion foon presented itself.

Death of the emons, and revolt of Elagabaat firft Baf-Antoninus.

confidered

The empress Julia had experienced all the vicissitudes of fortune. From an humble station Prefs Julia. Children raifed to greatness, only to taste the fuperior bitterness of an exalted rank. She was doomed to weep over the death of one of her lus, called fons, and over the life of the other. The cruel fianus and fate of Caracalla, though her good fense must have long taught her to expect it, awakened the feelings of a mother and of an empress. Notwithstanding the respectful civility expressed by the usurper towards the widow of Severus, she descended with a painful struggle into the condition of a subject, and soon withdrew herself by a voluntary death from the anxious and humiliating dependence 46. Julia Mæsa, her sister, was ordered to leave the court and Antioch. She retired to Emesa with an immense fortune, the fruit of twenty years favour, accompanied by her two daughters, Soæmias and Mamæa, each of

whom

F

t

r

1

t

(

⁴⁶ Dion, 1. lxxviii. p. 1330. The abridgment of Xiphilin, though less particular, is in this place clearer than the original.

whom was a widow, and each had an only fon. CHAP. Baffianus, for that was the name of the fon of Soæmias, was confecrated to the honourable ministry of high priest of the Sun; and this holy vocation, embraced either from prudence or fuperstition, contributed to raise the Syrian youth to the empire of Rome. A numerous body of troops was stationed at Emesa; and, as the severe discipline of Macrinus had constrained them to pass the winter encamped, they were eager to revenge the cruelty of fuch unaccustomed hardfhips. The foldiers, who reforted in crowds to the temple of the Sun, beheld with veneration and delight the elegant dress and figure of a young pontiff: they recognised, or they thought that they recognised, the features of Caracalla, whose memory they now adored. The artful Mæsa saw and cherished their rising partiality, and readily facrificing her daughter's reputation to the fortune of her grandfon, the infinuated that Bassianus was the natural son of their murdered fovereign. The fums distributed by her emisfaries with a lavish hand, silenced every objection, and the profusion sufficiently proved the affinity, or at least the refemblance, of Bassianus with the great original. The young Antoninus (for he A. D. 218. had affumed and polluted that respectable name) was declared emperor by the troops of Emela, afferted his hereditary right, and called aloud on the armies to follow the standard of a young and liberal prince, who had taken up arms to revenge

May 16.

Q 3 av and anomal guith any his

1

T

11

a

r

fe

C

CI

h

cl

er

pa

fo

al

ra

m

tr

ta

tra ig

ce

in

bo

for

the

ing

Joy

the

kn

AG

C HAP. his father's death and the oppression of the military order 47.

Defeat and death of

Whilst a conspiracy of women and eunuchs was Macrinus. concerted with prudence, and conducted with rapid vigour, Macrinus, who, by a decifive motion, might have crushed his infant enemy, floated between the opposite extremes of terror and fecurity, which alike fixed him inactive at Antioch. A spirit of rebellion diffused itself through all the camps and garrifons of Syria, fuccessive detachments murdered their officers 48, and joined the party of the rebels; and the tardy restitution of military pay and privileges was imputed to the acknowledged weakness of Macri-At length he marched out of Antioch, to meet the increasing and zealous army of the young pretender. His own troops seemed to take the field with faintness and reluctance; but, A.D. 218. in the heat of the battle 49, the Prætorian guards, almost by an involuntary impulse, afferted the

7th June.

47 According to Lampridius (Hift, August. p. 135.), Alexander Severus lived twenty-nine years, three months, and feven days. As he was killed March 19, 235, he was born December 12, 205, and was consequently about this time thirteen years old, as his elder cousin might be about seventeen. This computation suits much better the history of the young princes, than that of Herodian (1. v. p. 181.), who represents them as three years younger; whilf, by an opposite error of chronology, he lengthens the reign of Elagabalus two years beyond its real duration. For the particulars of the conspiracy, see Dion, l. lxxviii. p. 1339. Herodian, l. v. p. 184.

48 By a most dangerous proclamation of the pretended Antoninus, every foldier who brought in his officer's head, became entitled to his private estate, as well as to his military commission.

49 Dion, I. Ixxviii, p. 1345. Herodian, l. v. p. 186. The battle was fought near the village of Immæ, about two and twenty miles from Antioch,

fuperiority

fuperiority of their valour and discipline. The CHAP. rebel ranks were broken; when the mother and grandmother of the Syrian prince, who, according to their eastern custom, had attended the army, threw themselves from their covered chariots, and, by exciting the compassion of the foldiers, endeavoured to animate their drooping courage. Antoninus himfelf, who, in the rest of his life, never acted like a man, in this important crisis of his fate approved himself a hero, mounted his horse, and, at the head of his rallied troops, charged fword in hand among the thickest of the enemy; whilst the eunuch Gannys, whose occupations had been confined to female cares and the foft luxury of Asia, displayed the talents of an able and experienced general. The battle still raged with doubtful violence, and Macrinus might have obtained the victory, had he not betrayed his own cause by a shameful and precipitate flight. His cowardice ferved only to protract his life a few days, and to stamp deserved ignominy on his misfortunes. It is fcarcely neceffary to add, that his fon Diadumenianus was involved in the same fate. As soon as the stubborn Prætorians could be convinced that they fought for a prince who had basely deserted them, they furrendered to the conqueror; the contending parties of the Roman army mingling tears of joy and tenderness, united under the banners of the imagined fon of Caracalla, and the East acknowledged with pleasure the first emperor of Afiatic extraction.

The

C H A P. VI. Elagabalus writes to the fenate.

The letters of Macrinus had condescended to inform the senate of the slight disturbance occafioned by an impostor in Syria, and a decree immediately passed, declaring the rebel and his family public enemies; with a promise of pardon, however, to fuch of his deluded adherents as should merit it by an immediate return to their duty. During the twenty days that elapsed from the declaration to the victory of Antoninus (for in so short an interval was the fate of the Roman world decided), the capital and the provinces, more especially those of the East, were distracted with hopes and fears, agitated with tumult, and flained with a useless effusion of civil blood, since whosoever of the rivals prevailed in Syria, must reign over the empire. The specious letters in which the young conqueror announced his victory to the obedient senate, were filled with profesfions of virtue and moderation; the shining examples of Marcus and Augustus, he should ever consider as the great rule of his administration; and he affected to dwell with pride on the striking refemblance of his own age and fortunes with those of Augustus, who in the earliest youth had revenged by a fuccessful war the murder of his father. By adopting the style of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, fon of Antoninus and grandfon of Severus, he tacitly afferted his hereditary claim to the empire; but, by assuming the tribunitian and proconfular powers before they had been conferred on him by a decree of the fenate, he offended the delicacy of Roman prejudice. new and injudicious violation of the constitution

was probably dictated either by the ignorance of CHAP. his Syrian courtiers, or the fierce diffain of his military followers 50.

As the attention of the new emperor was di- Picture of verted by the most trisling amusements, he wasted Elagabamany months in his luxurious progress from Syria A.D. 219. to Italy, passed at Nicomedia his first winter after his victory, and deferred till the enfuing fummer his triumphal entry into the capital. A faithful picture, however, which preceded his arrival, and was placed by his immediate order over the altar of Victory in the senate-house, conveyed to the Romans the just but unworthy refemblance of his person and manners. He was drawn in his facerdotal robes of filk and gold, after the loofe flowing fashion of the Medes and Phænicians; his head was covered with a lofty tiara, his numerous collars and bracelets were adorned with gems of an inestimable value. His evebrows were tinged with black, and his cheeks painted with an artificial red and white 51. The grave fenators confessed with a sigh, that, after having long experienced the stern tyranny of their own countrymen, Rome was at length humbled beneath the effeminate luxury of Oriental despotism.

The Sun was worshipped at Emesa, under the His supername of Elagabalus 52, and under the form of a

⁵⁰ Dion, l. lxxix. p. 1353.

⁵¹ Dion, l. lxxix. p. 1363. Herodian, l. v. p. 189.

⁵² This name is derived by the learned from two Syriac words, Ela a God, and Cabal to form, the forming, or plastic God, a proper, and even happy epithet for the Sun. Wotton's History of Rome, p. 378.

black

234

CHAP black conical ftone, which, as it was univerfally believed, had fallen from heaven on that facred place. To this protecting deity, Antoninus, not without some reason, ascribed his elevation to the throne. The display of superstitious gratitude, was the only ferious business of his reign. The triumph of the god of Emesa over all the religions of the earth, was the great object of his zeal and vanity: and the appellation of Elagabalus (for he prefumed as pontiff and favourite to adopt that facred name) was dearer to him than all the titles of Imperial greatness. In a solemn procession through the streets of Rome, the way was strewed with gold dust; the black stone, set in precious gems, was placed on a chariot drawn by fix milk-white horses richly caparifoned. The pious emperor held the reins, and, supported by his ministers, moved slowly backwards, that he might perpetually enjoy the felicity of the divine presence. In a magnificent temple raised on the Palatine Mount, the facrifices of the god Elagabalus were celebrated with every circumstance of cost and solemnity. The richest wines, the most extraordinary victims, and the rarest aromatics, were profusely confumed on his altar. Around the altar a chorus of Syrian damfels performed their lascivious dances to the sound of barbarian music, whilst the gravest personages of the state and army, clothed in long Phænician tunics, officiated in the meanest functions, with affected zeal and fecret indignation 53.

To this temple, as to the common centre of CHAP. religious worship, the Imperial fanatic attempted to remove the Ancilia, the Palladium 54, and all the facred pledges of the faith of Numa. A crowd of inferior deities attended in various stations the majesty of the god of Emesa; but his court was still imperfect, till a female of distinguished rank was admitted to his bed. Pallas had been first chosen for his consort; but as it was dreaded left her warlike terrors might affright the fost delicacy of a Syrian deity, the Moon, adored by the Africans under the name of Astarte, was deemed a more fuitable companion for the Sun. Her image, with the rich offerings of her temple as a marriage portion, was transported with folemn pomp from Carthage to Rome, and the day of these mystic nuptials was a general festival in the capital and throughout the empire 55.

A rational voluptuary adheres with invariable His proflirespect to the temperate dictates of nature, and effeminate improves the gratifications of fense by focial in- luxury. tercourse, endearing connections, and the soft colouring of taste and the imagination. But Elagabalus (I speak of the emperor of that name),

54 He broke into the fanctuary of Vesta, and carried away a statue, which he supposed to be the Palladium; but the vestals boafted, that, by a pious fraud, they had imposed a counterfeit image on the profane intruder. Hift. August. p. 103.

55 Dion. l. lxxix. p. 1360. Herodian, l. v. p. 193. The fubjects of the empire were obliged to make liberal presents to the newmarried couple; and whatever they had promised during the life of Elagabalus, was carefully exacted under the administration of Mamæa.

corrupted

CHAP. corrupted by his youth, his country, and his fortune, abandoned himself to the groffest pleasures with ungoverned fury, and foon found difguft and fatiety in the midst of his enjoyments. The inflammatory powers of art were fummoned to his aid: the confused multitude of women, of wines, and of dishes, and the studied variety of attitudes and fauces, ferved to revive his languid appetites. New terms and new inventions in these sciences, the only ones cultivated and patronifed by the monarch 36, fignalized his reign, and transmitted his infamy to succeeding times: A capricious prodigality supplied the want of tafte and elegance; and whilft Elagabalus lavished away the treasures of his people in the wildest extravagance, his own voice and that of his flatterers applauded a spirit and magnificence unknown to the tameness of his predecessors. To confound the order of seasons and climates 57, to sport with the passions and prejudices of his fubjects, and to fubvert every law of nature and decency, were in the number of his most delicious amusements. A long train of concubines, and a rapid fuccession of wives, among whom was a vestal virgin, ravished by force from her

Damurica

⁵⁶ The invention of a new sauce was liberally rewarded; but if it was not relished, the inventor was confined to eat of nothing else, till he had discovered another more agreeable to the Imperial palate. Hist. August. p. 111.

⁵⁷ He never would eat sea-fish except at a great distance from the fea; he then would distribute vast quantities of the rarest forts, brought at an immense expence, to the peasants of the inland country. Hift. Aug. p. 109.

facred asylum 58, were insufficient to satisfy the CHAP. impotence of his passions. The master of the -Roman world affected to copy the dress and manners of the female fex, preferred the distaff to the sceptre, and dishonoured the principal dignities of the empire by distributing them among his numerous lovers; one of whom was publicly invested with the title and authority of the emperor's, or, as he more properly styled himself, of the empress's husband 59.

It may feem probable, the vices and follies of Contempt Elagabalus have been adorned by fancy, and of decency which difblackened by prejudice 60. Yet confining our- tinguished the Roman felves to the public scenes displayed before the tyrants. Roman people, and attefted by grave and contemporary historians, their inexpressible infamy furpasses that of any other age or country. The licence of an eastern monarch is feeluded from the eye of curiofity by the inaccessible walls of his feraglio. The fentiments of honour and gallantry have introduced a refinement of pleasure,

a regard for decency, and a respect for the public opinion, into the modern courts of Europe; but

⁵⁸ Dion, l. lxxix. p. 1358. Herodian, l. v. p. 192.

⁵⁹ Hierocles enjoyed that honour; but he would have been supplanted by one Zoticus, had he not contrived, by a potion, to enervate the powers of his rival, who being found on trial unequal to his reputation, was driven with ignominy from the palace. Dion, 1. lxxix. p. 1363, 1364. A dancer was made præfect of the city, a charioteer præfect of the watch, a barber præfect of the provisions. These three ministers, with many inferior officers, were all recommended, enormitate membrorum. Hift. August. p. 105.

⁶⁰ Even the credulous compiler of his life, in the Augustan history (p. 111.), is inclined to suspect that his vices may have been exaggerated.

CHAP. the corrupt and opulent nobles of Rome gratified every vice that could be collected from the mighty conflux of nations and manners. Secure of impunity, careless of censure, they lived without restraint in the patient and humble society of their saves and parasites. The emperor, in his turn, viewing every rank of his subjects with the fame contemptuous indifference, afferted without control his fovereign privilege of lust and luxury.

Difcontents of the army.

The most worthless of mankind are not afraid to condemn in others the fame diforders which they allow in themselves; and can readily discover some nice difference of age, character, or station, to justify the partial distinction. The licentious foldiers, who had raifed to the throne the dissolute son of Caracalla, blushed at their ignominious choice, and turned with difgust from that monfter, to contemplate with pleasure the opening virtues of his coufin Alexander the fon of Mamæa. The crafty Mæfa, sensible that her grandfon Elagabalus must inevitably destroy himfelf by his own vices, had provided another and furer support of her family. Embracing a favourable moment of fondness and devotion, she Alexander had perfuaded the young emperor to adopt Alexander, and to invest him with the title of Cæsar, that his own divine occupations might be no longer interrupted by the care of the earth. the fecond rank that amiable prince foon acquired the affections of the public, and excited the tyrant's jealoufy, who refolved to terminate the dangerous competition, either by corrupting the manners, or by taking away the life, of his rival. His

Severus declared Cæfar. A.D. 221.

His arts proved unsuccessful; his vain designs CHAP were constantly discovered by his own loquacious folly, and disappointed by those virtuous and faithful fervants whom the prudence of Mamæa had placed about the person of her son. In a hasty fally of passion, Elagabalus resolved to execute by force what he had been unable to compass by fraud, and by a despotic sentence degraded his cousin from the rank and honours of Cæsar. The meffage was received in the fenate with filence, and in the camp with fury. The Prætorian guards swore to protect Alexander, and to revenge the dishonoured majesty of the throne. The tears and promifes of the trembling Elagabalus, who only begged them to spare his life, and to leave him in the possession of his beloved Hierocles, diverted their just indignation; and they contented themselves with empowering their præfects to watch over the fafety of Alexander, and the conduct of the emperor 61.

It was impossible that such a reconciliation Sedition of should last, or that even the mean foul of Elaga- the guards, balus could hold an empire on fuch humiliating der of Elaterms of dependence. He foon attempted, by a gabalus. dangerous experiment, to try the temper of the 10 March. foldiers. The report of the death of Alexander, and the natural fuspicion that he had been murdered, inflamed their passions into fury, and the tempest of the camp could only be appealed by

is roquit

⁶¹ Dion, l. Ixxix. p. 1365. Herodian, l. v. p. 195-201. Hift. August. p. 105. The last of the three historians seems to have followed the best authors in his account of the revolution.

CHAP, the presence and authority of the popular youth. Provoked at this new instance of their affection for his cousin, and their contempt for his person, the emperor ventured to punish some of the leaders of the mutiny. His unfeasonable severity proved instantly fatal to his minions, his mother, and himself. Elagabalus was massacred by the indignant Prætorians, his mutilated corpse dragged through the streets of the city, and thrown into the Tyber. His memory was branded with eternal infamy by the fenate; the justice of whose decree has been ratified by posterity 62.

Accession of Alexander Severus.

In the room of Elagabalus, his cousin Alexander was raised to the throne by the Prætorian guards. His relation to the family of Severus, whose name he assumed, was the same as that of his predecessor; his virtue and his danger had already endeared him to the Romans, and the eager liberality of the senate conferred upon him, in one day, the various titles and powers of the

the guarant 62 The æra of the death of Elagabalus, and of the accession of Alexander, has employed the learning and ingenuity of Pagi, Tillemont, Valsecchi, Vignoli, and Torre bishop of Adria: The question is most affuredly intricate; but I still adhere to the authority of Dion; the truth of whose calculations is undeniable, and the purity of whose text is justified by the agreement of Xiphilin, Zonaras, and Cedrenus. Elagabalus reigned three years, nine months, and four days, from his victory over Macrinus, and was killed March 10, 222. But what shall we reply to the medals, undoubtedly genuine, which reckon the fifth year of his tribunitian power? We shall reply with the learned Valsecchi, that the usurpation of Macrinus was annihilated, and that the fon of Caracalla dated his reign from his father's death. After resolving this great difficulty, the smaller knots of this question may be easily untied, or cut afunder. add do dagooon ela ac krodous in

t

g

a

ti

W

Imperial dignity 63. But as Alexander was a CHAP. modest and dutiful youth, of only seventeen years of age, the reins of government were in the hands of two women, of his mother Mamæa, and of Mæsa, his grandmother. After the death of the latter, who furvived but a fhort time the elevation of Alexander, Mamæa remained the fole regent of her fon and of the empire.

In every age and country, the wifer, or at least Power of the stronger, of the two sexes, has usurped the Mamza. powers of the state, and confined the other to the cares and pleasures of domestic life. In hereditary monarchies, however, and especially in those of modern Europe, the gallant spirit of chivalry, and the law of fuccession, have accustomed us to allow a fingular exception; and a woman is often acknowledged the absolute sovereign of a great kingdom, in which she would be deemed incapable of exercifing the fmallest employment, civil or military. But as the Roman emperors were still considered as the generals and magistrates of the republic, their wives and mothers, although diffinguished by the name of Augusta, were never affociated to their personal honours; and a female reign would have appeared an inexpiable prodigy in the eyes of those primitive Romans, who married without love, or loved without delicacy and respect 64. The haughty Agrippina

⁶³ Hift. August. p. 114. By this unusual precipitation, the senate meant to confound the hopes of pretenders, and prevent the factions of the armies.

⁶⁴ Metellus Numidicus, the cenfor, acknowledged to the Roman people, in a public oration, that had kind Nature allowed us to VOL. I. exist

Agrippina aspired, indeed, to share the honours of the empire, which she had conferred on her fon; but her mad ambition, detefted by every citizen who felt for the dignity of Rome, was disappointed by the artful firmness of Seneca and Burrhus 65. The good sense, or the indifference, of succeeding princes, restrained them from offending the prejudices of their subjects; and it. was referved for the profligate Elagabalus, to Power of tottoor sig discharge the acts of the senate, with the name .ambus. of his mother Soæmias, who was placed by the fide of the confuls, and subscribed, as a regular member, the decrees of the legislative affembly. Her more prudent fister, Mamæa, declined the useless and odious prerogative, and a solemn law was enacted, excluding women for ever from the fenate, and devoting to the infernal gods, the head of the wretch by whom this fanction should be violated 66. The substance, not the pageantry, of power was the object of Mamæa's manly ambition. She maintained an absolute and lasting empire over the mind of her fon, and in his affection the mother could not brook a rival. Alexander, with her consent, married the daughter of a Patrician; but his respect for his father-

exist without the help of women, we should be delivered from a very troublesome companion; and he could recommend matrimony, only as the sacrifice of private pleasure to public duty. Aulus Gellius, i. 6.

in-law, and love for the empress, were inconfistent with the tenderness or interest of Mamæa. The Patrician was executed on the ready accu-

65 Tacit. Annal. xiii. 5. 66 Hift, August. p. 102. 107.

files

fation

tl

C

n

O

ju

gu

fib

wi

pe:

fation of treason, and the wife of Alexander driven CHAP. with ignominy from the palace, and banished into Africa 67 halve do 5123 memorini fiera sas

Notwithstanding this act of jealous cruelty, as Wise and well as some instances of avarice, with which moderate Mamæa is charged; the general tenour of her fration. administration was equally for the benefit of her fon and of the empire. With the approbation of the senate, she chose sixteen of the wifest and most virtuous senators, as a perpetual council of state, before whom every public business of moment was debated and determined. The celebrated Ulpian, equally distinguished by his knowledge of, and his respect for, the laws of Rome, was at their head; and the prudent firmness of this ariftocracy restored order and authority to the government. As foon as they had purged the city from foreign superstition and luxury, the remains of the capricious tyranny of Elagabalus, they applied themselves to remove his worthless creatures from every department of public administration, and to supply their places with men of virtue and ability. Learning, and the love of juffice, became the only recommendations for civil offices. Valour, and the love of discipline,

bourseh

⁶⁷ Dion, 1. 1xxx. p. 1369. Herodian, 1. vi. p. 206. Hift. Aus gust. p. 131. Herodian represents the Patricians as innocent. The Augustan History, on the authority of Dexippus, condemns him, as guilty of a conspiracy against the life of Alexander. It is imposfible to pronounce between them: but Dion is an irreproachable witness of the jealousy and cruelty of Mamæa toward the young empress, whose hard fate Alexander lamented, but durst not oppofe.

CHAP. the only qualifications for military employments 68.1

Education ander.

But the most important care of Mamæa and ous temper her wife counsellors, was to form the character of of Alex- the young emperor, on whose personal qualities the happiness or misery of the Roman world must ultimately depend. The fortunate foil affifted, and even prevented, the hand of cultivation. An excellent understanding soon convinced Alexander of the advantages of virtue, the pleafure of knowledge, and the necessity of labour. A natural mildness and moderation of temper preserved him from the assaults of passion and the allurements of vice. His unalterable regard for his mother, and his esteem for the wife Ulpian, guarded his unexperienced youth from the poison of flattery.

Journal of his ordinary life.

The fimple journal of his ordinary occupations exhibits a pleasing picture of an accomplished emperor 69, and with some allowance for the difference of manners, might well deserve the imitation of modern princes. Alexander rose early: the first moments of the day were consecrated to private devotion, and his domestic chapel was filled with the images of those heroes, who, by improving or reforming human life, had deferved the grateful reverence of posterity. But, as he

69 See his life in the Augustan History. The undistinguishing compiler has buried these interesting anecdotes under a load of trivial and us meaning circumstances.

0

⁶⁸ Herodian, l. vi. p. 203. Hift. August. p. 119. The latter infinuates, that when any law was to be paffed, the council was affifted by a number of able lawyers and experienced fenators, whose opinions were separately given, and taken down in writing.

deemed the service of mankind the most accept- CHAP. able worship of the gods, the greatest part of his morning hours was employed in his council, where he discussed public affairs, and determined private causes, with a patience and discretion above his years. The dryness of business was relieved by the charms of literature: and a portion of time was always fet apart for his favourite studies of poetry, history, and philosophy. The works of Virgil and Horace, the republics of Plato and Cicero, formed his tafte, enlarged his understanding, and gave him the noblest ideas of man and government. The exercises of the body fucceeded to those of the mind; and Alexander, who was tall, active, and robust, surpassed most of his equals in the gymnastic arts. Refreshed by the use of the bath and a slight dinner, he refumed, with new vigour, the bufiness of the day; and, till the hour of supper, the principal meal of the Romans, he was attended by his fecretaries, with whom he read and answered the multitude of letters, memorials, and petitions, that must have been addressed to the master of the greatest part of the world. His table was ferved with the most frugal simplicity; and whenever he was at liberty to confult his own inclination, the company confifted of a few felect friends, men of learning and virtue, amongst whom Ulpian was constantly invited. conversation was familiar and instructive; and the pauses were occasionally enlivened by the recital of some pleasing composition, which supplied the place of the dancers, comedians, and even gla-

R 3

diators.

CHAP diators, fo frequently furmoned to the tables of the rich and luxurious Romans 7°. The drefs of Alexander was plain and modest, his demeanor courteous and affable: at the proper hours his palace was open to all his subjects, but the voice of a crier was heard, as in the Eleusinian mysteries, pronouncing the fame falutary admonition; "Let none enter those holy walls, unless he is conscious of a pure and innocent mind "."

General happiness of the Roman world. A.D. 222 -235.

Such an uniform tenour of life, which left not a moment for vice or folly, is a better proof of the wisdom and justice of Alexander's government, than all the trifling details preserved in the compilation of Lampridius. Since the accession of Commodus, the Roman world had experienced, during a term of forty years, the fuccessive and various vices of four tyrants. From the death of Elagabalus, it enjoyed an auspicious calm of thirteen years. The provinces, relieved from the oppressive taxes invented by Caracalla and his pretended fon, flourished in peace and prosperity, under the administration of magistrates, who were convinced by experience, that to deserve the love of the subjects, was their best and only method of obtaining the favour of their fovereign. While fome gentle restraints were imposed on the innocent luxury of the Roman people, the price of provisions, and the interest of money, were reduced,

7º See the 13th Satire of Juvenal. 301 07 71 Hift. August. p. 119. ed or of to dancers, corrections, and even glan,

diamers.

0

fe

K

C

d

h

W

le

0

ft fe

n

to th

de

(e

fa

re

m

m

affe

by the paternal care of Alexander, whose prudent CHAP. liberality, without distressing the industrious, supplied the wants and amusements of the populace. The dignity, the freedom, the authority of the fenate were restored; and every virtuous fenator might approach the person of the emperor, without fear, and without a blush.

The name of Antoninus, ennobled by the vir- Alexander tues of Pius and Marcus, had been communi- name of cated by adoption to the diffolute Verus, and by Antoninus. descent to the cruel Commodus. It became the honourable appellation of the fons of Severus, was bestowed on young Diadumenianus, and at length proftituted to the infamy of the high priest of Emefa. Alexander, though pressed by the studied, and perhaps sincere importunity of the fenate, nobly refused the borrowed lustre of a name; whilst in his whole conduct he laboured to restore the glories and felicity of the age of the genuine Antonines 72.

In the civil administration of Alexander, wif- He atdom was enforced by power, and the people, reform the fensible of the public felicity, repaid their bene- army. factor with their love and gratitude. There still remained a greater, a more necessary, but a more difficult enterprise; the reformation of the military order, whose interest and temper, con-

72 See in the Hist. August. p. 116, 117, the whole contest between Alexander and the senate, extracted from the journals of that affembly. It happened on the fixth of March, probably of the year 223, when the Romans had enjoyed, almost a twelvemonth, the bleffings of his reign. Before the appellation of Antoninus was offered him as a title of honour, the fenate waited to fee whether Alexander would not assume it, as a family name.

R 4

firmed

CHAP, firmed by long impunity, rendered them impatient of the restraints of discipline, and careless of the bleffings of public tranquillity. In the execution of his defign the emperor affected to display his love, and to conceal his fear, of the army. The most rigid economy in every other branch of the administration, supplied a fund of gold and filver for the ordinary pay and the extraordinary rewards of the troops. In their marches he relaxed the fevere obligation of carrying feventeen days provision on their shoulders. Ample magazines were formed along the public roads, and as foon as they entered the enemy's country, a numerous train of mules and camels waited on their haughty laziness. As Alexander despaired of correcting the luxury of his soldiers, he attempted, at least, to direct it to objects of martial pomp and ornament, fine horses, splendid armour, and shield enriched with silver and He shared whatever fatigues he was obliged to impose, visited, in person, the sick and wounded, preserved an exact register of their services and his own gratitude, and-expressed, on every occasion, the warmest regard for a body of men, whose welfare, as he affected to declare, was fo closely connected with that of the state 73. By the most gentle arts he laboured to inspire the fierce multitude with a fense of duty, and to restore at least a faint image of that discipline to which the Romans owed their empire over fo

many

⁷³ It was a favourite faying of the emperor's, Se milites magis servare, quam seipsum; quod salus publica in his esset. Hist. Auguff. p. 130.

many other nations, as warlike and more power- CHAP. ful than themselves. But his prudence was vain, his courage fatal, and the attempt towards a reformation ferved only to inflame the ills it was meant to cure, mani-, rough to fishere to mean

The Prætorian guards were attached to the Seditions youth of Alexander. They loved him as a ten- torian der pupil, whom they had faved from a tyrant's guards, and murfury, and placed on the Imperial throne. That der of Ula amiable prince was fensible of the obligation; but as his gratitude was restrained within the limits of reason and justice, they soon were more diffatisfied with the virtues of Alexander, than they had ever been with the vices of Elagabalus. Their præfect, the wife Ulpian, was the friend of the laws and of the people; he was confidered as the enemy of the foldiers, and to his pernicious counsels every scheme of reformation was imputed. Some trifling accident blew up their discontent into a furious mutiny; and a civil war raged, during three days, in Rome, whilst the life of that excellent minister was defended by the grateful people. Terrified, at length, by the fight of some houses in slames, and by the threats of a general conflagration, the people yielded with a figh, and left the virtuous, but unfortunate, Ulpian to his fate. He was purfued into the Imperial palace, and maffacred at the feet of his mafter, who vainly strove to cover him with the purple, and to obtain his pardon from the inexorable foldiers. Such was the deplorable weakness of government, that the emperor was unable to revenge his murdered friend

ortho Pra-

Shrang

-num blue

Dion Caf-

triend

fius.

CHAP. friend and his infulted dignity, without stooping to the arts of patience and diffimulation. Epagathus, the principal leader of the mutiny, was removed from Rome, by the honourable employment of præsect of Egypt; from that high rank Sections he was gently degraded to the government of Crete; and when, at length, his popularity among the guards was effaced by time and abde of Ulfence, Alexander ventured to inflict the tardy, but deserved punishment of his crimes 74. Under the reign of a just and virtuous prince, the tyranny of the army threatened with instant death his most faithful ministers, who were suspected of an intention to correct their intolerable disorders. Danger of The historian Dion Cassius had commanded the Pannonian legions with the spirit of ancient discipline. Their brethren of Rome, embracing the common cause of military licence, demanded the head of the reformer. Alexander, however, instead of yielding to their seditious clamours, shewed a just sense of his merit and services, by appointing him his colleague in the confulship, and defraying from his own treasury the expence of that vain dignity: but as it was justly apprehended, that if the foldiers beheld him with the enfigns of his office, they would revenge the infult in his blood, the nominal first magistrate of the state retired, by the emperor's advice, from

> the fact of this matter, who 74 Though the author of the life of Alexander (Hift. August. p. 132.) mentions the fedition raised against Ulpian by the soldiers, he conceals the catastrophe, as it might discover a weakness in the administration of his hero. From this defigned omiffion, we may judge of the weight and candour of that author,

> > the

the city, and spent the greatest part of his con- CHAP fulship at his villas in Campania 75.

The lenity of the emperor confirmed the in- Tumults folence of the troops; the legions imitated the of the leexample of the guards, and defended their prerogative of licentiousness with the same furious obstinacy. The administration of Alexander was an unavailing struggle against the corruption of his age. In Illyricum, in Mauritania, in Armenia, in Mesopotamia, in Germany, fresh mutinies perpetually broke out; his officers were murdered, his authority was infulted, and his life at last sacrificed to the fierce discontents of the army 76. One particular fact well deserves to Firmness be recorded, as it illustrates the manners of the peror. troops, and exhibits a fingular inftance of their return to a sense of duty and obedience. Whilst the emperor lay at Antioch, in his Persian expedition, the particulars of which we shall hereafter relate, the punishment of some soldiers, who had been discovered in the baths of women, excited a fedition in the legion to which they belonged. Alexander ascended his tribunal, and with a modest firmness represented to the armed multitude, the absolute necessity as well as his inflexible resolution of correcting the vices introduced by his impure predeceffor, and of maintaining the discipline, which could not be relaxed without the ruin of the Roman name and empire. Their clamours interrupted his mild ex-

⁷⁵ For an account of Ulpian's fate and his own danger, fee the mutilated conclusion of Dion's History, 1. lxxx. p. 1371.

⁷⁶ Annot. Reimar. ad Dion Caffius, l. lxxx. p. 1369.

CHAP. postulation. "Reserve your shouts," faid the undaunted emperor, "till you take the field " against the Persians, the Germans, and the Sarmatians. Be filent in the presence of your " fovereign and benefactor, who bestows upon " you the corn, the clothing, and the money of the provinces. Be filent, or I shall no longer tyle you foldiers, but citizens ", if those indeed who disclaim the laws of Rome deserve " to be ranked among the meanest of the peo-" ple." His menaces inflamed the fury of the legion, and their brandished arms already threatened his person. "Your courage," resumed the intrepid Alexander, " would be more nobly dif-" played in the field of battle; me you may de-" ftroy, you cannot intimidate; and the severe " justice of the republic would punish your crime, " and revenge my death." The legion still perfifted in clamorous fedition, when the emperor pronounced, with a loud voice, the decisive fentence, " Citizens! lay down your arms, and dees part in peace to your respective habitations." The tempest was instantly appealed; the soldiers, filled with grief and shame, filently confessed the justice of their punishment and the power of difcipline, yielded up their arms and military enfigns, and retired in confusion, not to their camp, but to the feveral inns of the city. Alexander enjoyed, during thirty days, the edifying spec-

⁷⁷ Julius Cæsar had appeased a sedition with the same word Quirites; which thus opposed to Soldiers, was used in a sense of contempt, and reduced the offenders to the less honourable condition of mere citizens. Tacit. Annal. i. 43.

tacle of their repentance; nor did he restore CHAP. them to their former rank in the army, till he had punished with death those tribunes whose connivance had occasioned the mutiny. The grateful legion ferved the emperor, whilst living, and revenged him when dead 78.

The resolutions of the multitude generally de- Defects of pend on a moment; and the caprice of passion and chamight equally determine the feditious legion to racter. lay down their arms at the emperor's feet, or to plunge them into his breaft. Perhaps, if the fingular transaction had been investigated by the penetration of a philosopher, we should discover the fecret causes which on that occasion authorized the boldness of the prince, and commanded the obedience of the troops; and perhaps, if it had been related by a judicious historian, we should find this action, worthy of Cæfar himself. reduced nearer to the level of probability and the common standard of the character of Alexander The abilities of that amiable prince feem to have been inadequate to the difficulties of his fituation, the firmness of his conduct inferior to the purity of his intentions. His virtues, as well as the vices of Elagabalus, contracted a tincture of weakness and effeminacy from the fost climate of Syria, of which he was a native; though he blushed at his foreign origin, and liftened with a vain complacency to the flattering genealogists, who derived his race from

CHAP the ancient stock of Roman nobility 79. The pride and avarice of his mother cast a shade on the glories of his reign; and by exacting from his Triper years the same dutiful obedience which the had justly claimed from his unexperienced youth, Mamæa exposed to public ridicule both her fon's character and her own so. The fatigues of the Persian war irritated the military disconrafter. tent; the unsuccessful event degraded the reputation of the emperor as a general, and even as a foldier. Every cause prepared, and every circumstance hastened, a revolution, which distracted the Roman empire with a long feries of intestine calamities. At the doldw ashers to real out.

Digreffion on the finances of the empire.

The dissolute tyranny of Commodus, the civil wars occasioned by his death, and the new maxims of policy introduced by the house of Severus, had all contributed to increase the dangerous power of the army, and to obliterate the faint image of laws and liberty that was still impressed

79 From the Metelli. Hist. August. p. 119. The choice was judicious. In one short period of twelve years, the Metelli could reckon seven consulships and five triumphs. See Velleius Paterculus, ii. 11. and the Fasti.

80 The life of Alexander, in the Augustan History, is the mere idea of a perfect prince, an awkward imitation of the Cyropædia. The account of his reign, as given by Herodian, is rational and moderate, confistent with the general history of the age; and, in fome of the most invidious particulars, confirmed by the decifive fragments of Dion. Yet from a very paltry prejudice, the greater number of our modern writers abuse Herodian, and copy the Augustan History. See Mess. de Tillemont and Wotton. From the opposite prejudice, the emperor Julian (in Cæsarib. p. 315.) dwells with a visible satisfaction on the effeminate weaksies of the Syrian, and the ridiculous avarice of his mother.

on the minds of the Romans. This internal CHAP. change, which undermined the foundations of the empire, we have endeavoured to explain with fome degree of order and perspicuity. The personal characters of the emperors, their victories, laws, follies, and fortunes, can interest us no farther than as they are connected with the general history of the Decline and Fall of the monarchy. Our constant attention to that great object, will not fuffer us to overlook a most important edict of Antoninus Caracalla, which communicated to all the free inhabitants of the empire the name and privileges of Roman citizens. His unbounded liberality flowed not, however, from the fentiments of a generous mind; it was the fordid refult of avarice, and will naturally be illustrated by some observations on the finances of that state, from the victorious ages of the commonwealth to the reign of Alexander Severus.

The fiege of Veii in Tufcany, the first con- Effablishsiderable enterprise of the Romans, was protracted ment to the tenth year, much less by the strength of the place than by the unskilfulness of the befiegers. The unaccustomed hardships of so many winter campaigns, at the distance of near twenty miles from home si, required more than common encouragements; and the senate wisely prevented

⁸¹ According to the more accurate Dionysius, the city itself was only an hundred stadia, or twelve miles and a half from Rome; though some out-posts might be advanced farther on the fide of Etruria. Nardini, in a professed treatise, has combated the popular opinion and the authority of two popes, and has removed Veii from Civita Castellana, to a little spot called Isola, in the midway between Rome and the lake Bracciano.

CHAP, the clamours of the people, by the institution of a regular pay for the foldiers, which was levied by a general tribute, affeffed according to an equitable proportion on the property of the citizens 82. During more than two hundred years after the conquest of Veii, the victories of the republic added less to the wealth than to the power of Rome. The states of Italy paid their tribute in military fervice only, and the vast force both by sea and land, which was exerted in the Punic wars, was maintained at the expence of the Romans themselves. That high-spirited people (fuch is often the generous enthusiasm of freedom) cheerfully submitted to the most exceffive but voluntary burdens, in the just confidence that they should speedily enjoy the rich harvest of their labours. Their expectations were not disappointed. In the course of a sew years, the riches of Syracufe, of Carthage, of Macedonia, and of Asia, were brought in triumph to Rome. The treasures of Perseus alone amounted to near two millions sterling, and the Roman people, the fovereign of fo many nations, was for ever delivered from the weight of taxes 33. The increating revenue of the provinces was found fufficient to defray the ordinary establishment of war and government, and the superfluous mass of gold and filver was deposited in the temple of

and abolition of the tribute on Roman citizens.

Saturn,

0

n

a

le

li

e:

0

W

m

vi

Lu

⁸² See the 4th and 5th books of Livy. In the Roman Cenfus, property, power, and taxation, were commensurate with each

⁸³ Plin. Hift. Natur. 1. xxxiii. c. 3. Cicero de Offic. ii. 22, Plutarch. in P. Æmil. p. 275.

Saturn, and referved for any unforeseen emer- C HAP. vI.

History has never perhaps suffered a greater or Tributes more irreparable injury, than in the loss of the of the procurious register bequeathed by Augustus to the fenate, in which that experienced prince so accurately balanced the revenues and expences of the Roman empire 85. Deprived of this clear and comprehensive estimate, we are reduced to collect a few imperfect hints from fuch of the ancients as have accidentally turned afide from the fplendid to the more useful parts of history. We are informed that, by the conquests of Pompey, the tributes of Asia were raised from fifty to of Asia, one hundred and thirty-five millions of drachms; or about four millions and a half sterling 85, of Egypt, Under the last and most indolent of the Ptolemies, the revenue of Egypt is faid to have amounted to twelve thousand five hundred talents; a fum equivalent to more than two millions and a half of our money, but which 'was afterwards confiderably improved by the more exact œconomy of the Romans, and the increase of the trade of Æthiopia and India 87. Gaul of Gaul, was enriched by rapine, as Egypt was by commerce, and the tributes of those two great provinces have been compared as nearly equal to

⁸⁴ See a fine description of this accumulated wealth of ages, in Lucan's Phars. 1. iii. v. 155, &c.

⁸⁵ Tacit. in Annal. i. 11. It seems to have existed in the time of Appian.

⁸⁶ Plutarch. in Pompeio, p. 642. 87 Strabo, l. xvii. p. 798.

CHAP. each other in value 88. The ten thousand Euvi. boic or Phœnician talents, about four millions
of Africa, sterling 89, which vanquished Carthage was condemned to pay within the term of fifty years,
were a slight acknowledgment of the superiority
of Rome 90, and cannot bear the least proportion
with the taxes afterwards raised both on the lands
and on the persons of the inhabitants, when the
fertile coast of Africa was reduced into a pro-

of Spain,

Spain, by a very singular satality, was the Peru and Mexico of the old world. The discovery of the rich western continent by the Phænicians, and the oppression of the simple natives, who were compelled to labour in their own mines for the benefit of strangers, form an exact type of the more recent history of Spanish America 92. The Phænicians were acquainted only with the sea-coast of Spain; avarice, as well as ambition, carried the arms of Rome and Carthage into the heart of the country, and almost every part of the soil was sound pregnant with copper, silver, and gold. Mention is made of a mine near Carthagena which yielded every day twenty-five

vince 2: To deal to the state of the state of the state of

thousand

F

W

b

W

ri

th

th

ez

co

fe

of

fif

an

be

9

9

filve

State

9

in ?

⁸⁸ Velleius Paterculus, 1. ii. c. 39. he seems to give the preference to the revenue of Gaul.

⁸⁹ The Euboic, the Phoenician, and Alexandrian talents, were double in weight to the Attic. See Hooper of ancient weights and measures, p. iv. c. 5. It is very probable, that the same talent was carried from Tyre to Carthage.

⁹º Polyb. l. xv. c. 2. 91 Appian in Punicis, p. 84.

⁹² Diodorus Siculus, I. v. Cadiz was built by the Phoenicians a little more than a thousand years before Christ. See Vell. Paterc. i. 2.

thousand drachms of filver, or about three hun- CHAP. dred thousand pounds a year 93. Twenty thoufand pound weight of gold was annually received from the provinces of Asturia, Gallicia, and Lusitania 24.

We want both leisure and materials to pursue of the isle this curious inquiry through the many potent flates that were annihilated in the Roman empire. Some notion, however, may be formed of the revenue of the provinces where confiderable wealth had been deposited by nature, or collected by man, if we observe the severe attention that was directed to the abodes of folitude and sterility. Augustus once received a petition from the inhabitants of Gyarus, humbly praying that they might be relieved from one-third of their excessive impositions. Their whole tax amounted indeed to no more than one hundred and fifty drachms, or about five pounds: but Gyarus was a little island, or rather a rock, of the Ægean fea, destitute of fresh water and every necessary of life, and inhabited only by a few wretched fishermen 95.

From the faint glimmerings of fuch doubtful Amount and fcattered lights, we should be inclined to venue. believe, 1st, That (with every fair allowance for

⁹³ Strabo, 1. iii. p. 148.

⁹⁴ Plin. Hift. Natur. I. xxxiii. c. 3. He mentions likewise a filver mine in Dalmatia, that yielded every day fifty pounds to the

⁹⁵ Strabo, 1. x. p. 485. Tacit. Annal. iii. 69. and iv. 30. See in Tournefort (Voyages au Levant, Lettre viii.) a very lively picture of the actual mifery of Gyarus.

CHAP. the difference of times and circumstances) the general income of the Roman provinces could feldom amount to less than fifteen or twenty millions of our money 96; and, 2dly, That fo ample a revenue must have been fully adequate to all the expences of the moderate government instituted by Augustus, whose court was the modest family of a private fenator, and whose military establishment was calculated for the defence of the frontiers, without any aspiring views of conquest, or any serious apprehension of a foreign invalion.

Taxes on Roman citizens instituted by Augustus.

Notwithstanding the seeming probability of both these conclusions, the latter of them at least is positively disowned by the language and conduct of Augustus. It is not easy to determine whether, on this occasion, he acted as the common father of the Roman world, or as the oppressor of liberty; whether he wished to relieve the provinces, or to impoverish the senate and the equestrian order. But no sooner had he affumed the reins of government, than he frequently intimated the infufficiency of the tributes, and the necessity of throwing an equitable proportion of the public burden upon Rome and Italy. In the profecution of this unpopular defign, he advanced, however, by cautious and well-weighed steps. The introduction of customs was followed by the establishment of an excise,

and

3

e

to

P

to

e

A

th

C

fo

R

cl

CI

pa

by

hi

th

tic

fu

in at

⁹⁶ Lipsus de magnitudine Romana (l. ii. c. 3.) computes the revenue at one hundred and fifty millions of gold crowns; but his whole book, though learned and ingenious, betrays a very heated imagination.

and the scheme of taxation was completed by an CHAP. artful affeffment on the real and personal property of the Roman citizens, who had been exempted from any kind of contribution above a century and a half.

I. In a great empire like that of Rome, a The cufnatural balance of money must have gradually established itself. It has been already observed, that as the wealth of the provinces was attracted to the capital by the strong hand of conquest and power; so a considerable part of it was restored to the industrious provinces by the gentle influence of commerce and arts. In the reign of Augustus and his successors, duties were impoled on every kind of merchandile, which through a thousand channels flowed to the great centre of opulence and luxury; and in whatfoever manner the law was expressed, it was the Roman purchaser, and not the provincial merchant, who paid the tax 97. The rate of the customs varied from the eighth to the fortieth part of the value of the commodity; and we have a right to suppose that the variation was directed by the unalterable maxims of policy: that a higher duty was fixed on the articles of luxury than on those of necessity, and that the productions raised or manufactured by the labour of the subjects of the empire, were treated with more indulgence than was shewn to the pernicious, or at least the unpopular commerce of Arabia and

97 Tacit. Annal. x ii. 31.

Ditte

CHAP. India 98. There is still extant a long but imperfect catalogue of eastern commodities, which about the time of Alexander Severus were subject to the payment of duties; cinnamon, myrrh, pepper, ginger, and the whole tribe of aromatics, a great variety of precious stones, among which the diamond was the most remarkable for its price, and the emerald for its beauty 49: Parthian and Babylonian leather, cottons, filks, both raw and manufactured, ebony, ivory, and eunuchs 100. We may observe that the use and value of those effeminate flaves gradually rose with the decline of the empire.

The ex-

II. The excise, introduced by Augustus after the civil wars, was extremely moderate, but it was general. It feldom exceeded one per cent.; but it comprehended whatever was fold in the markets or by public auction, from the most confiderable purchases of lands and houses, to those minute objects which can only derive a value from their infinite multitude and daily confumption. Such a tax, as it affects the body of the people, has ever been the occasion of clamour and discontent. An emperor well acquainted

⁹⁸ See Pliny (Hift. Natur. l. vi. c. 23. l. xii. c. 18.). His obfervation, that the Indian commodities were fold at Rome at a hundred times their original price, may give us some notion of the produce of the customs, fince that original price amounted to more than eight hundred thousand pounds.

⁹⁹ The ancients were unacquainted with the art of cutting diamonds.

¹⁰⁰ M. Bouchaud, in his treatise de l'Impot chez les Romains, has transcribed this catalogue, from the Digest, and attempts to illustrate it by a very prolix commentary.

with the wants and resources of the state, was CHAP. obliged to declare by a public edict, that the support of the army depended in a great measure on the produce of the excise 101.

gacies and inherit-

III. When Augustus resolved to establish a Tax on lepermanent military force for the defence of his government against foreign and domestic enemies, he instituted a peculiar treasury for the pay of the foldiers, the rewards of the veterans, and the extraordinary expences of war. The ample revenue of the excise, though peculiarly appropriated to those uses, was found inadequate. To supply the deficiency, the emperor suggested a new tax of five per cent. on all legacies and inheritances. But the nobles of Rome were more tenacious of property than of freedom, Their indignant murmurs were received by Augustus with his usual temper. He candidly referred the whole business to the senate, and exhorted them to provide for the public fervice by some other expedient of a less odious nature. They were divided and perplexed. He infinuated to them, that their obstinacy would oblige him to propose a general land-tax and capitation. They acquiefced in filence 102. The new impofition on legacies and inheritances was however mitigated by some restrictions. It did not take place unless the object was of a certain value,

101 Tacit. Annal. i. 78. Two years afterwards, the reduction of the poor kingdom of Cappadocia gave Tiberius a pretence for diminishing the excise to one half; but the relief was of very short duration.

102 Dion Cassius, 1, lv. p. 794. 1. lvi. p. 825.

han every

CHAP, most probably of fifty or an hundred pieces of gold 103; nor could it be exacted from the nearest of kin on the father's fide 104. When the rights of nature and poverty were thus fecured, it feemed reasonable, that a stranger, or a distant relation, who acquired an unexpected accession of fortune, should cheerfully resign a twentieth part of it, for the benefit of the state ios.

Suited to the laws and manners.

Such a tax, plentiful as it must prove in every wealthy community, was most happily fuited to the fituation of the Romans, who could frame their arbitrary wills, according to the dictates of reason or caprice, without any restraint from the modern fetters of entails and fettlements. From various causes the partiality of paternal affection often lost its influence over the stern patriots of the commonwealth, and the dissolute nobles of the empire; and if the father bequeathed to his fon the fourth part of his estate, he removed all ground of legal complaint 106. But a rich childless old man was a domestic tyrant, and his power increased with his years and infirmities. A fervile crowd, in which he frequently reckoned prætors and confuls, courted his fmiles, pampered his avarice, applauded his follies, ferved his passions, and waited with impatience for his

¹⁰³ The fum is only fixed by conjecture.

¹⁰⁴ As the Roman law subfisted for many ages, the Cognati, or relations on the mother's fide, were not called to the fuccession. This harsh institution was gradually undermined by humanity, and finally abolished by Justinian.

¹⁰⁵ Plin. Panegyric. c. 37.

¹⁰⁶ See Heineccius in the Antiquit, Juris Romani, 1. ii.

death. The arts of attendance and flattery were CHAP, formed into a most lucrative science; those who professed it acquired a peculiar appellation; and the whole city, according to the lively descriptions of fatire, was divided between two parties, the hunters and their game 107. Yet, while fo many unjust and extravagant wills were every day dictated by cunning, and fubscribed by folly, a few were the refult of rational esteem and virtuous gratitude. Cicero, who had fo often defended the lives and fortunes of his fellow-citizens, was rewarded with legacies to the amount of an hundred and seventy thousand pounds 108; nor do the friends of the younger Pliny feem to have been less generous to that amiable orator109. Whatever was the motive of the testator, the treasury claimed, without distinction, the twentieth part of his estate; and in the course of two or three generations, the whole property of the fubject must have gradually passed through the coffers of the state.

In the first and golden years of the reign of Nero, Regulatithat prince, from a delire of popularity, and ons of the emperors. perhaps from a blind impulse of benevolence, conceived a wish of abolishing the oppression of the customs and excise. The wisest senators applauded his magnanimity; but they diverted him

108 Cicero in Philipp. ii. c. 16,

from

¹⁰⁷ Horat. 1. ii. Sat. v. Petron. c. 116, &c. Plin. 1. ii. Epift, 20.

¹⁰⁹ See his epiftles. Every fuch will gave him an occasion of displaying his reverence to the dead, and his justice to the living. He reconciled both, in his behaviour to a son who had been disinherited by his mother (v. 1.).

CHAP. from the execution of a delign, which would have diffolved the strength and resources of the republic ". Had it indeed been possible to realize this dream of fancy, fuch princes as Trajan and the Antonines would furely have embraced with ardour the glorious opportunity of conferring fo fignal an obligation on mankind. Satisfied, however, with alleviating the public burden, they attempted not to remove it. The mildness and precision of their laws ascertained the rule and measure of taxation, and protected the subject of every rank against arbitrary interpretations, antiquated claims, and the infolent vexation of the farmers of the revenue ". For it is somewhat fingular, that, in every age, the best and wifest of the Roman governors perfevered in this pernicious method of collecting the principal branches at least of the excise and customs "12.

Edict of Caracalla.

-fix nacil

with To I

The fentiments, and, indeed, the fituation of Caracalla, were very different from those of the Antonines. Inattentive, or rather averse to the welfare of his people, he found himself under the necessity of gratifying the infatiate avarice, which he had excited in the army. Of the feveral impositions introduced by Augustus, the twentieth on inheritances and legacies was the most fruitful, as well as the most comprehensive. As its

¹¹⁰ Tacit, Annal. xiii. go. Esprit des Loix, l. xii. c. 19.

[&]quot; 111 See Pliny's Panegyric, the Augustan History, and Burman de Vectigal. passim.

The tributes (properly fo called) were not farmed; fince the good princes often remitted many millions of arrears. influ-

influence was not confined to Rome or Italy, the CHAP. produce continually increased with the gradual extension of the ROMAN CITY. The new citizens, though charged, on equal terms 128, with the payment of new taxes, which had not affect. ed them as subjects, derived an ample compensation from the rank they obtained, the privileges they acquired, and the fair prospect of honours and fortune that was thrown open to their ambition. But the favour, which implied a diffine- The freetion, was lost in the prodigality of Caracalla, and dom of the the reluctant provincials were compelled to assume to all the the vain title, and the real obligations, of Roman als, for the citizens. Nor was the rapacious fon of Severus purpose of taxation. contented with fuch a measure of taxation, as had appeared fufficient to his moderate predecessors. Instead of a twentieth, he exacted a tenth of all legacies and inheritances; and during his reign (for the ancient proportion was restored after his death) he crushed alike every part of the empire under the weight of his iron fceptre 114.

When all the provincials became liable to the Temporapeculiar impositions of Roman citizens, they ry reducfeemed to acquire a legal exemption from the tribute. tributes which they had paid in their former condition of subjects. Such were not the maxims of government adopted by Caracalla and his pretended fon. The old as well as the new taxes were, at the same time, levied in the provinces.

The fituation of the new citizens is minutely described by Pliny (Panegyric, c. 37, 38, 39). Trajan published a law very much in their favour.

¹¹⁴ Dion, l. lxxvii. p. 1295.

CHAP.

AP. It was referved for the virtue of Alexander to relieve them in a great measure from this intolerable grievance, by reducing the tributes to a thirtieth part of the fum exacted at the time of his accession "5. It is impossible to conjecture the motive that engaged him to spare so trifling a remnant of the public evil; but the noxious weed, which had not been totally eradicated, again fprang up with the most luxuriant growth, and in the fucceeding age darkened the Roman world with its deadly shade. In the course of this hiftory, we shall be too often summoned to explain the land-tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil, and meat, which were exacted from the provinces for the use of the court, the army, and the capital.

Confequences of the univerfal freedom of Rome.

As long as Rome and Italy were respected as the centre of government, a national spirit was preserved by the ancient, and insensibly imbibed by the adopted, citizens. The principal commands of the army were filled by men who had received a liberal education, were well instructed in the advantages of laws and letters, and who had risen, by equal steps, through the regular succession of civil and military honours 116. To their insluence and example we may partly ascribe the modest obedience of the legions during the two first centuries of the Imperial history.

no more than the third part of an aureus, and proportional pieces of gold were coined by Alexander's order. Hist. August. p. 127. with the commentary of Salmasius.

416 See the lives of Agricola, Vespasian, Trajan, Severus, and his three competitors; and indeed of all the eminent men of those times.

But

to and

10/200

But when the last enclosure of the Roman CHAP. constitution was trampled down by Caracalla, the separation of professions gradually succeeded to the distinction of ranks. The more polished citizens of the internal provinces were alone qualified to act as lawyers and magistrates. The rougher trade of arms was abandoned to the peafants and barbarians of the frontiers, who knew no country but their camp, no science but that of war, no civil laws, and scarcely those of military discipline. With bloody hands, savage manners, and desperate resolutions, they sometimes guarded, but much oftener subverted, the throne of the emperors.

vice and flotte that, on the father's decent the property of a neglen, the harron a dicere of agendetends by mis intention as yet unitable to developed and and there are being to prepared and estimated the first of the first property force of emprous configure of the substance of sei la identification i i gentalitation die electr right demantiful for track and dealine adulate See the first fronter will be a some of a constitution will be and the antique and the state of the same than the same of the The state of the property of the court of the contract of TORREST THE ENGINEER COME TO THE ENGINEERING THE WORLD was as to remine the deal of his property the Market will be a south of the deline statistical

with a finish was a state of the same of t

other colorina, recommendation of the colorinal state of the colorinal states. tan many and a contract of the party and a second of the wilds for their therefore our tip to be easily their police \$2000 and 194.

nemal chale to submine the arrange and

th

n

o tl

fo

0

n

t

0

CHAP. VII.

The Elevation and Tyranny of Maximin.—Rebellion in Africa and Italy, under the Authority of the Senate.—Civil Wars and Seditions.—Violent Deaths of Maximin and his Son, of Maximus and Balbinus, and of the three Gordians.—Usurpation and secular Games of Philip.

CHAP.
VII.
The apparent ridicule

Frie Frie

dons of

F the various forms of government, which have prevailed in the world, an hereditary monarchy feems to prefent the fairest scope for ridicule. Is it possible to relate, without an indignant smile, that, on the father's decease, the property of a nation, like that of a drove of oxen, descends to his infant son, as yet unknown to mankind and to himself; and that the bravest warriors and the wifest statesmen, relinquishing their natural right to empire, approach the royal cradle with bended knees and protestations of inviolable fidelity? Satire and declamation may paint these obvious topics in the most dazzling colours, but our more ferious thoughts will refpect a useful prejudice, that establishes a rule of fuccession, independent of the passions of mankind; and we shall cheerfully acquiesce in any expedient which deprives the multitude of the dangerous, and indeed the ideal, power of giving themselves a master.

and folid advantages of hereditary fucsession. In the cool shade of retirement, we may easily devise imaginary forms of government, in which

the sceptre shall be constantly bestowed on the CHAP. most worthy, by the free and incorrupt suffrage of the whole community. Experience overturns these airy fabrics, and teaches us, that, in a large fociety, the election of a monarch can never devolve to the wifest, or to the most numerous, part of the people. The army is the only order of men sufficiently united to concur in the same fentiments, and powerful enough to impose them on the rest of their fellow-citizens: but the temper of foldiers, habituated at once to violence and to flavery, renders them very unfit guardians of a legal, or even a civil conflitution. Justice, humanity, or political wisdom, are qualities they are too little acquainted with in themselves, to appreciate them in others. Valour will acquire their esteem, and liberality will purchase their fuffrage; but the first of these merits is often lodged in the most savage breasts; the latter can only exert itself at the expence of the public; and both may be turned against the possessor of the throne, by the ambition of a daring rival.

The superior prerogative of birth, when it has Want of it obtained the fanction of time and popular opi- man emnion, is the plainest and least invidious of all pire prodistinctions among mankind. The acknowledged the greatest right extinguishes the hopes of faction, and the conscious security disarms the cruelty of the monarch. To the firm establishment of this idea. we owe the peaceful fuccession, and mild administration, of European monarchies. To the defect of it, we must attribute the frequent civil

CHAP. wars, through which an Asiatic Despot is obliged to cut his way to the throne of his fathers. Yet, even in the East, the sphere of contention is usually limited to the princes of the reigning house, and as soon as the more fortunate competitor has removed his brethren, by the fword and the bow-string, he no longer entertains any jealoufy of his meaner subjects. But the Roman empire, after the authority of the senate had funk into contempt, was a vast scene of confusion. The royal, and even noble, families of the provinces, had long fince been led in triumph before the car of the haughty republicans. The ancient families of Rome had successively fallen beneath the tyranny of the Cæfars; and whilft those princes were shackled by the forms of a commonwealth, and disappointed by the repeated failure of their posterity', it was impossible that any idea of hereditary succession should have taken root in the minds of their subjects. The right to the throne, which none could claim from birth, every one affumed from merit. The daring hopes of ambition were fet loofe from the falutary restraints of law and prejudice; and the meanest of mankind might, without folly, entertain a hope of being raifed by valour and fortune to a rank in the army, in which a fingle crime would enable him to wrest the sceptre of the world from his feeble and unpopular master. After the mur-

der

g

P

n

C

tl

ft

0

fc

W

ar

ne

al

af

P

no

lo

of

W

al

fti

There had been no example of three fuccessive generations on the throne; only three instances of sons who succeeded their fathers. The marriages of the Cæfars (notwithstanding the permission, and the frequent practice of divorces) were generally unfruitful.

der of Alexander Severus, and the elevation of CHAP. Maximin, no emperor could think himself safe upon the throne, and every barbarian pealant of the frontier might aspire to that august, but dangerous station.

About thirty-two years before that event, the Birth and emperor Severus, returning from an eastern ex- fortunes of Maximin. pedition, halted in Thrace, to celebrate, with military games, the birth-day of his younger fon, The country flocked in crowds to behold their sovereign, and a young barbarian of gigantic stature earnestly solicited, in his rude dialect, that he might be allowed to contend for the prize of wreftling. As the pride of discipline would have been difgraced in the overthrow of a Roman foldier by a Thracian peafant, he was matched with the stoutest followers of the camp, sixteen of whom he fuccessively laid on the ground. His victory was rewarded by some trifling gifts, and a permission to inlist in the troops. The next day, the happy barbarian was diftinguished above a crowd of recruits, dancing and exulting after the fashion of his country. As soon as he perceived that he had attracted the emperor's notice, he instantly ran up to his horse, and followed him on foot, without the least appearance of fatigue, in a long and rapid career. " cian," faid Severus, with astonishment, " art " thou disposed to wrestle after thy race?" Most willingly, Sir, replied the unwearied youth, and, almost in a breath, overthrew feven of the strongest soldiers in the army. A gold collar was VOL. I. the

CHAP. the prize of his matchless vigour and activity, and he was immediately appointed to ferve in the horse-guards who always attended on the person of the fovereign 2.

His military fervice and honours.

Maximin, for that was his name, though born on the territories of the empire, descended from a mixed race of barbarians. His father was a Goth, and his mother, of the nation of the Alani. He displayed, on every occasion, a valour equal to his strength; and his native fierceness was foon tempered or difguifed by the knowledge of the world. Under the reign of Severus and his fon, he obtained the rank of centurion, with the favour and esteem of both those princes, the former of whom was an excellent judge of merit. Gratitude forbade Maximin to ferve under the affaffin of Caracalla. Honour taught him to decline the effeminate infults of Elagabalus. On the accession of Alexander he returned to court, and was placed by that prince in a station useful to the fervice, and honourable to himfelf. The fourth legion, to which he was appointed tribune, foon became, under his care, the best disciplined of the whole army. With the general applause of the foldiers, who bestowed on their favourite hero the names of Ajax and Hercules, he was fuccessively promoted to the first military command 3; and had not he still retained too much

2 Hift. August. p. 138.

P

³ Hist. August. p. 140. Herodian, 1. vi. p. 223. Aurelius Victor. By comparing these authors, it should seem, that Maximin had the particular command of the Triballian horse, with the general

of his savage origin, the emperor might perhaps CHAP have given his own fifter in marriage to the fon of Maximin 4.

Instead of securing his fidelity, these favours Conspiferved only to inflame the ambition of the Thra- racy of Maximin. cian peasant, who deemed his fortune inadequate to his merit, as long as he was constrained to acknowledge a fuperior. Though a stranger to real wisdom, he was not devoid of a selfish cunning, which shewed him, that the emperor had loft the affection of the army, and taught him to improve their discontent to his own advantage. It is easy for faction and calumny to shed their poison on the administration of the best of princes, and to accuse even their virtues, by artfully confounding them with those vices to which they bear the nearest affinity. The troops listened with pleasure to the emissaries of Maximin. They blushed at their own ignominious patience, which, during thirteen years, had supported the vexatious discipline imposed by an effeminate Syrian, the timid flave of his mother and of the fenate. It was time, they cried, to cast away that useless phantom of the civil power, and to elect for their prince and general a real foldier, educated in camps, exercised in war, who would affert the glory, and distribute among his companions the treasures of the empire. A great

general commission of disciplining the recruits of the whole army. His Biographer ought to have marked, with more care, his exploits, and the fuccessive steps of his military promotions.

e

S

f

4 See the original letter of Alexander Severus, Hist. August. p. 149.

C HAP.

army was at that time affembled on the banks of the Rhine, under the command of the emperor himself, who, almost immediately after his return from the Persian war, had been obliged to march against the barbarians of Germany. The important care of training and reviewing the new levies was intrusted to Maximin. One day, as he entered the field of exercise, the troops, either from a sudden impulse or a formed conspiracy, saluted him emperor, silenced by their loud acclamations his obstinate resusal, and hastened to consummate their rebellion by the murder of Alexander Severus.

A. D. 235. March 19.

Murder of Alexander Severus.

The circumstances of his death are variously related. The writers, who suppose that he died in ignorance of the ingratitude and ambition of Maximin, affirm, that, after taking a frugal repast in the sight of the army, he retired to sleep, and that, about the seventh hour of the day, a part of his own guards broke into the Imperial tent, and, with many wounds, affassinated their virtuous and unsuspecting prince. If we credit another, and indeed a more probable account, Maximin was invested with the purple by a numerous detachment, at the distance of several miles from the head-quarters; and he trusted for success rather to the secret wishes than to the

⁵ Hist. August. p. 135. I have softened some of the most improbable circumstances of this wretched biographer. From this illworded narration, it should seem, that the prince's bussion having accidentally entered the tent, and awakened the slumbering monarch, the sear of punishment urged him to persuade the disaffected soldiers to commit the murder.

public declarations of the great army. Alexan- CHAP. der had fufficient time to awaken a faint sense of loyalty among his troops; but their reluctant professions of fidelity quickly vanished on the appearance of Maximin, who declared himself the friend and advocate of the military order, and was unanimously acknowledged emperor of the Romans by the applauding legions. The fon of Mamæa, betrayed and deferted, withdrew into his tent, desirous at least to conceal his approaching fate from the infults of the multitude. He was foon followed by a tribune and fome centurions, the ministers of death; but, instead of receiving with manly refolution the inevitable stroke, his unavailing cries and entreaties difgraced the last moments of his life, and converted into contempt some portion of the just pity which his innocence and misfortunes must inspire. His mother Mamæa, whose pride and avarice he loudly accused as the cause of his ruin, perished with her fon. The most faithful of his friends were facrificed to the first fury of the foldiers. Others were referved for the more deliberate cruelty of the usurper; and those who experienced the mildest treatment, were stripped of their employments, and ignominiously driven from the court and army 6.

The former tyrants, Caligula and Nero, Com- Tyranny modus and Caracalla, were all dissolute and un- of Maximin. experienced youths, educated in the purple, and

6 Herodian, 1. vi. p. 223-227.

⁷ Caligula, the eldest of the four, was only twenty-five years of age when he afcended the throne; Caracalla was twenty-three, Commodus nineteen, and Nero no more than feventeen.

CHAP. corrupted by the pride of empire, the luxury of Rome, and the perfidious voice of flattery. The cruelty of Maximin was derived from a different fource, the fear of contempt. Though he depended on the attachment of the foldiers, who loved him for virtues like their own, he was conscious that his mean and barbarian origin, his favage appearance, and his total ignorance of the arts and inftitutions of civil life 8, formed a very unfavourable contrast with the amiable manners of the unhappy Alexander. He remembered, that, in his humbler fortune, he had often waited before the door of the haughty nobles of Rome, and had been denied admittance by the infolence of their slaves. He recollected too the friendship of a few who had relieved his poverty, and affifted his rifing hopes. But those who had spurned, and those who had protected the Thracian, were guilty of the same crime, the knowledge of his original obscurity. For this crime many were put to death; and by the execution of feveral of his benefactors, Maximin published, in characters of blood, the indelible history of his baseness and ingratitude 9.

> The dark and fanguinary foul of the tyrant, was open to every fuspicion against those among his fubjects who were the most distinguished by their birth or merit. Whenever he was alarmed

³ It appears that he was totally ignorant of the Greek language; which, from its universal use in conversation and letters, was an effential part of every liberal education.

⁹ Hift. August. p. 141. Herodian, l. vil. p. 237. The latter of these historians has been most unjustly censured for sparing the vices of Maximin.

with the found of treason, his cruelty was un- CHAP. bounded and unrelenting. A conspiracy against s his life was either discovered or imagined, and Magnus, a confular fenator, was named as the principal author of it. Without a witness, without a trial, and without an opportunity of defence, Magnus, with four thousand of his supposed accomplices, were put to death. Italy and the whole empire were infested with innumerable spies and informers. On the slightest accusation, the first of the Roman nobles, who had governed provinces, commanded armies, and been adorned with the confular and triumphal ornaments, were chained on the public carriages, and hurried away to the emperor's presence. Confiscation, exile, or fimple death, were esteemed uncommon instances of his lenity. Some of the unfortunate fufferers he ordered to be fewed up in the hides of flaughtered animals, others to be exposed to wild beafts, others again to be beaten to death with clubs. During the three years of his reign, he disdained to visit either Rome or Italy. His camp, occasionally, removed from the banks of the Rhine to those of the Danube, was the feat of his ftern despotism, which trampled on every principle of law and justice, and was supported by the avowed power of the fword 10. No man

¹⁰ The wife of Maximin, by infinuating wife counsels with female gentleness, sometimes brought back the tyrant to the way of truth and humanity. See Ammianus Marcellinus, l. xiv. c. 1. where he alludes to the fact which he had more fully related under the reign of the Gordians. We may collect from the medals, that Paullina was the name of this benevolent empress; and from the title of Diva, that she died before Maximin. (Valesius ad loc. cit. Ammian.) Spanheim de U. et P. N. tom. ii. p. 300.

bl

vi

fr

W

ir

h

0

knowledge of civil business, was suffered near his person; and the court of a Roman emperor revived the idea of those ancient chiefs of slaves and gladiators, whose savage power had left a deep impression of terror and detestation."

Oppression of the provinces.

As long as the cruelty of Maximin was confined to the illustrious fenators, or even to the bold adventurers, who in the court or army expose themselves to the caprice of fortune, the body of the people viewed their sufferings with indifference, or perhaps with pleasure. But the tyrant's avarice, stimulated by the insatiate desires of the foldiers, at length attacked the public property. Every city of the empire was possessed of an independent revenue, destined to purchase corn for the multitude, and to supply the expences of the games and entertainments. By a fingle act of authority, the whole mass of wealth was at once conficated for the use of the Imperial treasury. The temples were stripped of their most valuable offerings of gold and filver, and the statues of gods, heroes, and emperors were melted down and coined into money. These impious orders could not be executed without tumults and massacres, as in many places the people chose rather to die in the defence of their altars, than to behold in the midst of peace their cities exposed to the rapine and cruelty of war. foldiers themselves, among whom this facrilegious plunder was distributed, received it with a

He was compared to Spartacus and Athenio. Hist. August.

blush; and, hardened as they were in acts of C HAP. violence, they dreaded the just reproaches of their friends and relations. Throughout the Roman world a general cry of indignation was heard, imploring vengeance on the common enemy of human kind; and at length, by an act of private oppression, a peaceful and unarmed province was: driven into rebellion against him 12.

The procurator of Africa was a fervant worthy Revolt in of fuch a master, who considered the fines and Africa.
A.D. 237. confiscations of the rich as one of the most fruit- April. ful branches of the Imperial revenue. An iniquitous fentence had been pronounced against fome opulent youths of that country, the execution of which would have stripped them of far the greater part of their patrimony. In this extremity, a resolution that must either complete or prevent their ruin, was dictated by despair. A respite of three days, obtained with difficulty from the rapacious treasurer, was employed in collecting from their estates a great number of flaves and peafants, blindly devoted to the commands of their lords, and armed with the ruftic weapons of clubs and axes. The leaders of the conspiracy, as they were admitted to the audience of the procurator, stabbed him with the daggers concealed under their garments, and, by the affistance of their tumultuary train, seized on the little town of Thysdrus 13, and erected the stand-

12 Herodian, l. vii. p. 238. Zosm. 1, i. p. 15.

ard

¹³ In the fertile territory of Byzacium, one hundred and fifty miles to the fouth of Carthage. This city was decorated, probably

CHAP. ard of rebellion against the sovereign of the Roman empire. They rested their hopes on the hatred of mankind against Maximin, and they judiciously resolved to oppose to that detested tyrant, an emperor whose mild virtues had already acquired the love and esteem of the Romans, and whose authority over the province would give weight and stability to the enterprise. Gordianus, their proconful, and the object of their choice, refused, with unfeigned reluctance, the dangerous honour, and begged with tears that they would fuffer him to terminate in peace a long and innocent life, without staining his feeble age with civil blood. Their menaces compelled him to accept the Imperial purple, his only refuge indeed against the jealous cruelty of Maximin; fince, according to the reasoning of tyrants, those who have been esteemed worthy of the throne deserve death, and those who deliberate have already rebelled 14.

Character and elevatwo Gordians.

The family of Gordianus was one of the most and eleva-tion of the illustrious of the Roman senate. On the father's side, he was descended from the Gracchi; on his mother's, from the emperor Trajan. great estate enabled him to support the dignity of his birth, and, in the enjoyment of it, he displayed an elegant taste, and beneficent dispolition. The palace in Rome, formerly inhabited by the great Pompey, had been, during

> by the Gordians, with the title of colony, and with a fine amphitheatre, which is still in a very perfect state. See Itinerar. Wesseling, p. 59. and Shaw's Travels, p. 117.

14 Herodian, l. vii. p. 239. Hift. August. p. 153.

fe

fa

p

W

r

fi

0

P

tl

b

a

t

feveral generations, in the possession of Gordian's CHAP. family 15. It was diffinguished by ancient trophies of naval victories, and decorated with the works of modern painting. His villa on the road to Præneste, was celebrated for baths of fingular beauty and extent, for three stately rooms of an hundred feet in length, and for a magnificent portico, supported by two hundred columns of the four most curious and costly forts of marble 16. The public shows exhibited at his expence, and in which the people were entertained with many hundreds of wild beafts and gladiators 17, feem to surpass the fortune of a subject; and whilst the liberality of other magistrates was confined to a few folemn festivals in Rome, the magnificence of Gordian was repeated, when he was ædile, every month in the year, and extended, during his consulship, to the principal

15 Hift. August. p. 152. The celebrated house of Pompey in carinis, was usurped by Marc Antony, and consequently became, after the Triumvir's death, a part of the Imperial domain. The emperor Trajan allowed and even encouraged the rich senators to purchase those magnificent and useless places (Plin. Panegyric. c. 50.): and it may seem probable, that, on this occasion, Pompey's house came into the possession of Gordian's great grandsather.

The Claudian, the Numidian, the Carystian, and the Synnadian. The colours of Roman marbles have been faintly described and imperfectly distinguished. It appears, however, that the Carystian was a sea-green, and that the marble of Synnada was white mixed with oval spots of purple. See Salmasius ad Hist. August. p. 164.

17 Hist. August. p. 151, 152. He sometimes gave five hundred pair of Gladiators, never less than one hundred and fifty. He once gave for the use of the Circus one hundred Sicilian, and as many Cappadocian horses. The animals designed for hunting, were chiefly bears, boars, bulls, stags, elks, wild asses, &c. Elephants and lions seem to have been appropriated to Imperial magnificence.

cities

C HAP. cities of Italy. He was twice elevated to the last mentioned dignity, by Caracalla and by Alexander: for he possessed the uncommon talent of acquiring the esteem of virtuous princes, without alarming the jealoufy of tyrants. His long life was innocently spent in the study of letters and the peaceful honours of Rome; and, till he was named proconful of Africa by the voice of the fenate and the approbation of Alexander 18, he appears prudently to have declined the command of armies and the government of provinces. As long as that emperor lived, Africa was happy under the administration of his worthy reprefentative; after the barbarous Maximin had usurped the throne, Gordianus alleviated the miseries which he was unable to prevent. When he reluctantly accepted the purple, he was above fourscore years old; a last and valuable remains of the happy age of the Antonines, whose virtues he revived in his own conduct, and celebrated in an elegant poem of thirty books. With the venerable proconful, his fon, who had accompanied him into Africa as his lieutenant, was likewife declared emperor. His manners were less pure, but his character was equally amiable with that of his father. Twenty-two acknowledged concubines, and a library of fixty-two thousand volumes, attested the variety of his inclinations; and from the productions which he left behind

¹⁸ See the original letter, in the Augustan History, p. 152, which at once shews Alexander's respect for the authority of the senate, and his efteem for the proconful appointed by that affembly.

him, it appears that the former as well as the CHAP. latter were designed for use rather than for oftentation 19. The Roman people acknowledged in the features of the younger Gordian the refemblance of Scipio Africanus, recollected with pleafure that his mother was the grand-daughter of Antoninus Pius, and rested the public hope on those latent virtues which had hitherto, as they fondly imagined, lain concealed in the luxurious indolence of a private life.

As foon as the Gordians had appealed the first They folitumult of a popular election, they removed their firmation court to Carthage. They were received with the of their authority. acclamations of the Africans, who honoured their virtues, and who, fince the visit of Hadrian, had never beheld the majesty of a Roman emperor. But these vain acclamations neither strengthened nor confirmed the title of the Gordians. They were induced by principle, as well as interest, to folicit the approbation of the fenate; and a deputation of the noblest provincials was fent, without delay, to Rome, to relate and justify the conduct of their countrymen, who, having long fuffered with patience, were at length resolved to act with vigour. The letters of the new princes were modest and respectful, excusing the necessity which had obliged them to accept the Imperial title; but submitting their election

¹⁹ By each of his concubines, the younger Gordian left three or four children. His literary productions, though less numerous, were by no means contemplible.

CHAP, and their fate to the supreme judgment of the fenate 20.

The fenate ratifies their elec-Gordians;

The inclinations of the senate were neither doubtful nor divided. The birth and noble allition of the ances of the Gordians had intimately connected them with the most illustrious houses of Rome. Their fortune had created many dependants in that affembly, their merit had acquired many friends. Their mild administration opened the flattering prospect of the restoration, not only of the civil but even of the republican government. The terror of military violence, which had first obliged the senate to forget the murder of Alexander, and to ratify the election of a barbarian peasant 21, now produced a contrary effect, and provoked them to affert the injured rights of freedom and humanity. The hatred of Maximin towards the fenate was declared and implacable; the tamest submission had not appealed his fury, the most cautious innocence would not remove his suspicions; and even the care of their own fafety urged them to share the fortune of an enterprise, of which (if unsuccessful) they were fure to be the first victims. These considerations, and perhaps others of a more private nature, were debated in a previous conference of the confuls and the magistrates. As soon as their refolution was decided, they convoked in the temple of Castor the whole body of the senate,

accord-

20

CI

th

C

²⁰ Herodian, l. vii. p. 243. Hist. August. p. 144.

²¹ Quod tamen patres dum periculosum existimant; inermes armato refistere approbaverunt. Aurelius Victor.

e

er

d

according to an ancient form of secrecy 22, cal- CHAP. culated to awaken their attention, and to conceal their decrees. "Confcript fathers," faid the conful Syllanus, "the two Gordians, both of " confular dignity, the one your proconful, the " other your lieutenant, have been declared em-" perors by the general consent of Africa. Let " us return thanks," he boldly continued, " to " the youth of Thysdrus; let us return thanks " to the faithful people of Carthage, our gene-" rous deliverers from an horrid monster-Why " do you hear me thus coolly, thus timidly? "Why do you cast those anxious looks on each " other? why hesitate? Maximin is a public er enemy! may his enmity foon expire with him, " and may we long enjoy the prudence and feli-" city of Gordian the father, the valour and " constancy of Gordian the fon 23!" The noble ardour of the conful revived the languid spirit of the senate. By an unanimous decree the elec- and detion of the Gordians was ratified, Maximin, his Maximina fon, and his adherents, were pronounced enemies publicenemy. of their country, and liberal rewards were offered to whofoever had the courage and good fortune to destroy them.

During the emperor's absence, a detachment Assumes of the Prætorian guards remained at Rome, to

the command of Rome and Italy,

protect,

²² Even the fervants of the house, the scribes, &c. were excluded, and their office was filled by the senators themselves. We are obliged to the Augustan History, p. 159, for preserving this curious example of the old discipline of the commonwealth.

²³ This spirited speech, translated from the Augustan historian, p. 156, feems transcribed by him from the original registers of the fenate.

C.HAP. protect, or rather to command the capital. The Præsect Vitalianus had signalized his fidelity to Maximin, by the alacrity with which he had obeyed, and even prevented, the cruel mandates of the tyrant. His death alone could rescue the authority of the fenate and the lives of the fenators, from a state of danger and suspence. Before their resolves had transpired, a quæstor and some tribunes were commissioned to take his devoted life. They executed the order with equal boldness and success; and, with their bloody daggers in their hands, ran through the streets, proclaiming to the people and the foldiers, the news of the happy revolution. The enthusiasm of liberty was seconded by the promise of a large donative, in lands and money; the statues of Maximin were thrown down; the capital of the empire acknowledged, with transport, the authority of the two Gordians and the senate 24; and the example of Rome was followed by the rest of Italy.

and prepares for a civil war.

. Whica !

A new spirit had arisen in that assembly, whose long patience had been infulted by wanton defpotism and military licence. The senate assumed the reins of government, and, with a calm intrepidity, prepared to vindicate by arms the cause of freedom. Among the confular fenators recommended by their merit and fervices to the favour of the emperor Alexander, it was eafy to felect twenty, not unequal to the command of an army, and the conduct of a war. To these

24 Herodian, l. vii. p. 244.

was the defence of Italy intrusted. Each was CHAP. appointed to act in his respective department, authorized to enrol and discipline the Italian youth; and instructed to fortify the ports and highways, against the impending invasion of Maximin. A number of deputies, chosen from the most illustrious of the senatorian and equestrian orders, were dispatched at the same time to the governors of the feveral provinces, earnestly conjuring them to fly to the affiftance of their country, and to remind the nations of their ancient ties of friendship with the Roman senate and people. The general respect with which these deputies were received, and the zeal of Italy and the provinces in favour of the fenate, fufficiently prove that the fubjects of Maximin were reduced to that uncommon diffress, in which the body of the people has more to fear from oppression than from resistance. The consciousness of that melancholy truth, inspires a degree of persevering fury, seldom to be found in those civil wars which are artificially supported for the benefit of a few factious and deligning leaders 25 lo soiodo oft that Thead or born leres

For while the cause of the Gordians was em- Defeat and braced with such diffusive ardour, the Gordians death of the two themselves were no more. The feeble court of Gordians. Carthage was alarmed with the rapid approach of 3d July. Capelianus, governor of Mauritania, who, with a finall band of veterans, and a fierce hoft of bar-

²⁵ Herodian, I. vii. p. 247. 1. viii. p. 277. Hift, August. p. 156 -158.

CHAP barians, attacked a faithful, but unwarlike province. The younger Gordian fallied out to meet the enemy at the head of a few guards, and a numerous undisciplined multitude, educated in the peaceful luxury of Carthage. His useless valour ferved only to procure him an honourable death, in the field of battle. His aged father, whose reign had not exceeded thirty-fix days. put an end to his life on the first news of the defeat. Carthage, destitute of defence, opened her gates to the conqueror, and Africa was exposed to the rapacious cruelty of a slave, obliged to fatisfy his unrelenting mafter with a large account of blood and treasure 26.

Election of Maximus and Balbinus by the 9th July.

Deffest und to dash

A. Da32. ed July.

own sils

The fate of the Gordians filled Rome with just, but unexpected terror. The senate convoked in the temple of Concord, affected to transact the common business of the day; and seemed to decline, with trembling anxiety, the confideration of their own, and the public danger. A filent consternation prevailed on the affembly, till a fenator, of the name and family of Trajan, awakened his brethren from their fatal lethargy. He represented to them, that the choice of cautious dilatory measures had been long since out of their power; that Maximin, implacable by nature,

and

1,30

21

W

th

n

fi

n

"

"

"

"

"

"

"

**

..

..

..

"

fi

th

ti

66

66

01/1

fer

A

211

The rechle court of Contiens. 26 Herodian, 1. vii. p. 254. Hist. August. p. 150-160. may observe, that one month and fix days, for the reign of Gordian, is a just correction of Cafaubon and Panvinius, instead of the absurd reading of one year and fix months. See Commentar. p. 193. Zosimus relates, I. i. p. 17. that the two Gordians perished by a tempest in the midst of their navigation. A strange ignorance of history, or a strange abuse of metaphors!

and exasperated by injuries, was advancing to- CHAPA wards Italy, at the head of the military force of the empire; and that their only remaining alternative, was either to meet him bravely in the field, or tamely to expect the tortures and ignominious death referved for unsuccessful rebellion. "We have lost," continued he, "two excellent " princes; but unless we desert ourselves, the " hopes of the republic have not perished with " the Gordians. Many are the fenators, whose " virtues have deferved, and whose abilities " would fustain, the Imperial dignity. Let us " elect two emperors, one of whom may con-" duct the war against the public enemy, whilst " his colleague remains at Rome to direct the " civil administration. I cheerfully expose myfelf to the danger and envy of the nomination, "and give my vote in favour of Maximus and "Balbinus. Ratify my choice, conscript fathers, " or appoint, in their place, others more worthy " of the empire." The general apprehension filenced the whispers of jealousy; the merit of the candidates was univerfally acknowledged; and the house resounded with the sincere acclamations, of " long life and victory to the emperors " Maximus and Balbinus. You are happy in " the judgment of the fenate; may the republic be happy under your administration 27 !" The friendlib p, of Cisfor (to whem herendered the med important

27 See the Augustan History, p. 166, from the registers of the fenate; the date is confessedly faulty, but the coincidence of the Apollinarian games enables us to correct it. The

CHAP. Their cha-

The virtues and the reputation of the new emperors justified the most fanguine hopes of the Romans. The various nature of their talents feemed to appropriate to each his peculiar department of peace and war, without leaving room for jealous emulation. Balbinus was an admired orator, a poet of distinguished fame, and a wise magistrate, who had exercised with innocence and applause the civil jurisdiction in almost all the interior provinces of the empire. His birth was noble 28, his fortune affluent, his manners liberal and affable. In him, the love of pleasure was corrected by a fense of dignity, nor had the habits of ease deprived him of a capacity for business. The mind of Maximus was formed in a rougher mould. By his valour and abilities he had raised himself from the meanest origin to the first employments of the flate and army. His victories over the Sarmatians and the Germans, the aufterity of his life, and the rigid impartiality of his justice, whilst he was Præsect of the city, commanded the esteem of a people, whose affections were engaged in favour of the more amiable Balbinus. The two colleagues had both been

COI

no

the

the

old

of

and

and

the

Po

tha

fol

dit

ne

ful

TI

of

the

of

pa

TO!

ed

of the

cit

or

on

hift

ror

con

²⁸ He was descended from Cornelius Balbus, a noble Spaniard and the adopted fon of Theophanes the Greek historian. Balbus obtained the freedom of Rome by the favour of Pompey, and preferved it by the eloquence of Cicero (fee Orat. pro Cornel. Balbo). The friendship of Cæsar (to whom he rendered the most important fecret fervices in the civil war) raifed him to the confulfhip and the pontificate, honours never yet possessed by a stranger. The nephew of this Balbus triumphed over the Garamantes. See Dictionnaire de Bayle, au mot Balbus, where he distinguishes the several persons of that name, and rectifies, with his usual accuracy, the mistakes of former writers concerning them. confuls

confuls (Balbinus had twice enjoyed that ho- CHAP. nourable office), both had been named among the twenty lieutenants of the senate; and since the one was fixty and the other feventy-four years old 29, they had both attained the full maturity of age and experience.

After the senate had conferred on Maximus Tumult at and Balbinus an equal portion of the consular Rome.

The younand tribunitian powers, the title of Fathers of ger Gorditheir country, and the joint office of Supreme clared Cz-Pontiff, they ascended to the Capitol, to return thanks to the gods, protectors of Rome 20. The folemn rites of facrifice were diffurbed by a fedition of the people. The licentious multitude neither loved the rigid Maximus, nor did they fufficiently fear the mild and humane Balbinus. Their increasing numbers surrounded the temple of Jupiter; with obstinate clamours they afferted their inherent right of consenting to the election of their fovereign; and demanded, with an apparent moderation, that, besides the two emperors chosen by the senate, a third should be added of the family of the Gordians, as a just return of gratitude to those princes who had facrificed their lives for the republic. At the head of the city-guards, and the youth of the equestrian order, Maximus and Balbinus attempted to cut

²⁹ Zonaras, 1. xii. p. 622. But little dependance is to be had on the authority of a moderate Greek, so grossly ignorant of the history of the third century, that he creates several imaginary emperors, and confounds those who really existed.

¹⁰ Herodian, l. vii. p. 256, supposes that the senate was at first convoked in the Capitol, and is very eloquent on the occasion. The Augustan History, p. 116, seems much more authentic.

Tumult at Rotae.

-nuov onT

ner Cordian is de-

clared Co-.483

CHAP their way through the feditious multitude. The multitude, armed with flicks and stones, drove them back into the Capitol. It is prudent to yield when the contest, whatever may be the iffue of it, must be fatal to both parties. A boy, only thirteen years of age, the grandson of the elder, and nephew of the younger, Gordian, was produced to the people, invested with the ornaments and title of Cæfar. The tumult was appeafed by this eafy condescension; and the two emperors, as foon as they had been peaceably acknowledged in Rome, prepared to defend Italy against the common enemy.

Maximin prepares to attack the their emperors.

219813

Whilst in Rome and Africa revolutions succeeded each other with fuch amazing rapidity, fenate and the mind of Maximin was agitated by the most furious passions. He is faid to have received the news of the rebellion of the Gordians, and of the decree of the fenate against him, not with the temper of a man, but the rage of a wild beaft; which, as it could not discharge itself on the distant fenate, threatened the life of his fon, of his friends, and of all who ventured to approach his person. The grateful intelligence of the death of the Gordians, was quickly followed by the affurance that the fenate, laying afide all hopes of pardon or accommodation, had substituted in their room two emperors, with whose merit he could not be unacquainted. Revenge was the only consolation left to Maximin, and revenge could only be obtained by arms. The strength of the legions had been affembled by Alexander morther Million of 136, feems much more authentica

from all parts of the empire. Three successful CHAP. campaigns against the Germans and the Sarmatians, had raised their fame, confirmed their discipline, and even increased their numbers, by filling the ranks with the flower of the barbarian youth. The life of Maximin had been spent in war, and the candid feverity of history cannot refuse him the valour of a soldier, or even the abilities of an experienced general 31. It might naturally be expected, that a prince of fuch a character, instead of suffering the rebellion to gain stability by delay, should immediately have marched from the banks of the Danube to those of the Tyber, and that his victorious army, instigated by contempt for the senate, and eager to gather the spoils of Italy, should have burned with impatience to finish the easy and lucrative conquest. Yet as far as we can trust to the obscure chronology of that period 32, it appears that

have three several orations of Maximin to his army, on the rebellion of Africa and Rome: M. de Tillemont has very justly observed, that they neither agree with each other, nor with truth. Histoire des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 799.

32 The carelessness of the writers of that age leaves us in a singular perplexity. 1. We know that Maximus and Balbinus were killed during the Capitoline games. Herodian, l. viii. p. 285. The authority of Censorinus (de Die Natali, c. 18.) enables us to fix those games with certainty to the year 238, but leaves us in ignorance of the month or day. 2. The election of Gordian by the senate, is fixed, with equal certainty, to the 27th of May; but we are at a loss to discover, whether it was in the same or the preceding year. Tillemont and Muratori, who maintain the two opposite opinions, bring into the field a desultory troop of authorities, conjectures and probabilities. The one seems to draw out, the other to contract the series of events, between those periods, more than can be well reconciled to reason and history. Yet it is necessary to chuse between them.

U 4

the

by

ar

P

th A

th

to

ci fe

ec

d

th

d

ir d

t١

b

iI

W

in

b

to

n

by.

CHAP, the operations of some foreign war deferred the Italian expedition till the enfuing fpring. From the prudent conduct of Maximin, we may learn that the favage features of his character have been exaggerated by the pencil of party, that his paffions, however impetuous, submitted to the force of reason, and that the barbarian possessed something of the generous spirit of Sylla, who subdued the enemies of Rome, before he fuffered himself to revenge his private injuries 33.

Marches into Italy. A. D.238. February.

When the troops of Maximin, advancing in excellent order, arrived at the foot of the Julian Alps, they were terrified by the silence and desolation that reigned on the frontiers of Italy. The villages and open towns had been abandoned on their approach by the inhabitants, the cattle was driven away, the provisions removed, or destroyed, the bridges broke down, nor was any thing left which could afford either shelter or subfiftence to an invader. Such had been the wife orders of the generals of the senate; whose defign was to protract the war, to ruin the army of Maximin by the flow operation of famine, and to confume his strength in the sleges of the principal cities of Italy, which they had plentifully stored with men and provisions from the deferted country. Aquileia received and withstood the first shock of the invasion. The streams that iffue from the head of the Hadriatic gulf, swelled

Siege of Aquileia.

³³ Velleius Paterculus, l. ii, c. 24. The president de Monte-Iquieu (in his dialogue between Sylla and Eucrates) expresses the fentiments of the dictator, in a spirited and even a sublime manper,

by the melting of the winter fnows 34, opposed CHAP. an unexpected obstacle to the arms of Maximin. At length, on a fingular bridge, constructed with art and difficulty, of large hogsheads, he transported his army to the opposite bank, rooted up the beautiful vineyards in the neighbourhood of Aquileia, demolished the suburbs, and employed the timber of the buildings in the engines and towers, with which on every fide he attacked the city. The walls, fallen to decay during the fecurity of a long peace, had been hastily repaired on this fudden emergency; but the firmest defence of Aquileia confifted in the conftancy of the citizens; all ranks of whom, instead of being dismayed, were animated by the extreme danger, and their knowledge of the tyrant's unrelenting temper. Their courage was supported and directed by Crispinus and Menophilus, two of the twenty lieutenants of the fenate, who, with a small body of regular troops, had thrown themselves into the besieged place. The army of Maximin was repulsed on repeated attacks, his machines

34 Muratori (Annali d'Italia, tom. ii. p. 294.) thinks the melting of the snows suits better with the months of June or July, than with those of February. The opinion of a man who passed his life between the Alps and the Appennines, is undoubtedly of great weight; yet I observe, 1. That the long winter, of which Muratori takes advantage, is to be found only in the Latin version, and not in the Greek text of Herodian. 2. That the vicissitude of suns and rains, to which the soldiers of Maximin were exposed (Herodian, l. viii. p. 277.), denotes the spring rather than the summer. We may observe likewise, that these several streams, as they melted into one, composed the Timavus, so poetically (in every sense of the word) described by Virgil. They are about twelve miles to the east of Aquileia. See Cluyer. Italia Antiqua, tom. i. p. 189, &c.

destroyed

CHAP. destroyed by showers of artificial fire; and the generous enthusiasm of the Aquileians was exalted into a confidence of fuccess, by the opinion, that Belenus, their tutelar deity, combated in person in the defence of his distressed worshippersossidiud diagramas in the neighbourhest

Conduct of Maximus.

The emperor Maximus, who had advanced as far as Ravenna, to secure that important place, and to hasten the military preparations, beheld the event of the war in the more faithful mirror of reason and policy. He was too sensible, that a fingle town could not refift the perfevering efforts of a great army; and he dreaded, lest the enemy, tired with the obstinate resistance of Aquileia, should on a sudden relinquish the fruitless siege, and march directly towards Rome. The fate of the empire and the cause of freedom must then be committed to the chance of a battle; and what arms could he oppose to the veteran legions of the Rhine and Danube? Some troops newly levied among the generous but enervated youth of Italy; and a body of German auxiliaries, on whose firmness, in the hour of trial, it was dangerous to depend. In the midst of these just alarms, the stroke of domestic confpiracy punished the crimes of Maximin, and delivered Rome and the fenate from the calamities that would furely have attended the victory of an enraged barbarian.

The

³⁵ Herodian, 1. vili. p. 272. The Celtic deity was supposed to be Apollo, and received under that name the thanks of the fenate. A temple was likewise built to Venus the bald, in honour of the women of Aquileia, who had given up their hair to make ropes for the military engines.

The people of Aquileia had fearcely exper CHAP. rienced any of the common miseries of a siege. their magazines were plentifully supplied, and Murder of feveral fountains within the walls affured them of and his an inexhauftible resource of fresh water. The A. D. 238 foldiers of Maximin were, on the contrary, exposed to the inclemency of the season, the contagion of difehfe, and the horrors of famine. The open country was ruined, the rivers filled with the flain and polluted with blood. A spirit of despair and disaffection began to diffuse itself among the troops; and as they were cut off from all intelligence, they eafily believed that the whole empire had embraced the cause of the senate, and that they were left as devoted victims to perish under the impregnable walls of Aquileia. The fierce temper of the tyrant was exasperated by disappointments, which he imputed to the cowardice of his army; and his wanand ill-timed cruelty, instead of striking terror, inspired hatred and a just defire of revenge. A party of Prætorian guards, who trembled for their wives and children in the camp of Alba, near Rome, executed the sentence of the fenate. Maximin, abandoned by his guards, was slain in his tent, with his fon (whom he had affociated to the honours of the purple), Anulinus the præfect, and the principal ministers of his tyranny 36. The fight of their heads, borne no are that that Man min could drick in a day on amphora for

-roq sili . TIME!

at reven gollons of wine, , and our thingy or house manned of mose, 36 Herodian, 1. viii. p. 279. Hift. August. p. 146. The duration of Maximin's reign has not been defined with much accuracy, except by Entropius, who allows him three years and a few days

His portrait.

CHAP on the point of spears, convinced the citizens of Aquileia, that the fiege was at an end; the gates of the city were thrown open, a liberal market was provided for the hungry troops of Maximin, and the whole army joined in folemn protestations of fidelity to the fenate and the people of Rome, and to their lawful emperors Maximus and Balbinus. Such was the deferved fate of a brutal savage, destitute, as he has generally been represented, of every sentiment that distinguishes a civilized, or even a human being. The body was fuited to the foul. The stature of Maximin exceeded the measure of eight feet, and circumstances almost incredible are related of his matchless strength and appetite 27. Had he lived in a lefs enlightened age, tradition and poetry might well have described him as one of those monstrous giants, whose supernatural power. was conftantly exerted for the destruction of man-

Roman world.

Joy of the It is easier to conceive than to describe the universal joy of the Roman world on the fall of the tyrant, the news of which is faid to have been carried in four days from Aquileia to Rome. The return of Maximus was a triumphal proces-

> (l. ix. 1.); we may depend on the integrity of the text, as the Latin original is checked by the Greek version of Pæanius.

37 Eight Roman feet and one third, which are equal to above eight English feet, as the two measures are to each other in the proportion of 967 to 1000. See Graves's discourse on the Roman foot. We are told that Maximin could drink in a day an amphora (or about feven gallons of wine), and eat thirty or forty pounds of meat, He could move a loaded waggon, break a horse's leg with his fift, crumble stones in his hand, and tear up small trees by the roots. See his life in the Augustan History.

fion,

fion, his colleague and young Gordian went out CHAR to meet him, and the three princes made their entry into the capital, attended by the ambaffadors of almost all the cities of Italy, saluted with the splendid offerings of gratitude and superstition, and received with the unfeigned acclamations of the fenate and people, who perfuaded themselves that a golden age would succeed to an age of iron 22. The conduct of the two emperors corresponded with these expectations. They administered justice in person; and the rigour of the one was tempered by the other's clemency. The oppressive taxes with which Maximin had loaded the rights of inheritance and fuccession, were repealed, or at least moderated. Discipline was revived, and with the advice of the fenate many wife laws were enacted by their imperial ministers, who endeavoured to restore a civil constitution on the ruins of military tyranny. "What reward may we expect for delivering "Rome from a monster?" was the question asked by Maximus, in a moment of freedom and confidence. Balbinus answered it without hesitation, "The love of the fenate, of the people, " and of all mankind." " Alas!" replied his more penetrating colleague, " Alas! I dread the " hatred of the foldiers, and the fatal effects of

" their resentment 39." His apprehensions were but too well justified by the event.

³⁸ See the congratulatory letter of Claudius Julianus the conful, to the two emperors, in the Augustan History.

¹⁹ Hift. August. p. 171.

CHAP. While Maximus was preparing to defend Italy against the common foe, Balbinus, who remains ed at Rome, had been engaged in scenes of blood and intestine discord. Distrust and jealousy reigned in the senate; and even in the temples where they affembled, every fenator carried either open or concealed arms. In the midft of their deliberations, two veterans of the guards, actuated either by curiofity or a finister motive, audaciously thrust themselves into the house, and advanced by degrees beyond the altar of Victory. Gallicanus, a confular, and Mæcenas, a Prætorian fenator, viewed with indignation their infolent intrusion: drawing their daggers, they laid the spies, for such they deemed them, dead at the foot of the altar, and then advancing to the door of the fenate, imprudently exhorted the multitude to massacre the Prætorians, as the fecret adherents of the tyrant. Those who escaped the first fury of the tumult took, refuge in the camp, which they defended with superior advantage against the reiterated attacks of the people, affifted by the numerous bands of gladiators, the property of opulent nobles. The civil war lasted many days, with infinite loss and confusion on both sides. When the pipes were broken that fupplied the camp with water, the Prætorians were reduced to intolerable diffress; but in their turn they made desperate sallies into the city, fet fire to a great number of houses, and filled the streets with the blood of the inhabitants. The emperor Balbinus attempted, by ineffectual edicts and precarious truces, to reconcile

F

d

d

eile the factions at Rome. But their animofity, CHAP. though smothered for a while, burnt with redoubled violence. The foldiers, detefting the fenate and the people, despised the weakness of a prince who wanted either the spirit or the power to command the obedience of his subjects 40.

After the tyrant's death, his formidable army Discontent had acknowledged, from necessity rather than of the Prefrom choice, the authority of Maximus, who guards. transported himself without delay to the camp before Aquileia. As foon as he had received their oath of fidelity, he addressed them in terms full of mildness and moderation; lamented, rather than arraigned, the wild diforders of the times, and affured the foldiers, that of all their past conduct, the fenate would remember only their generous defertion of the tyrant, and their voluntary return to their duty. Maximus enforced his exhortations by a liberal donative, purified the camp by a folemn facrifice of expiation, and then dismissed the legions to their feveral provinces, impressed, as he hoped, with a lively fense of gratitude and obedience ". But nothing could reconcile the haughty spirit of the Prætorians. They attended the emperors on the memorable day of their public entry into Rome; but amidst the general acclamations, the fullen dejected countenance of the guards, fufficiently declared that they confidered themselves as the object, rather than the partners, of the triumph. When the whole body was united in their camp, those who had ferved under Maximin, and those

Herodian, l. viii. p. 258, 41 Herodian, l. viii. p. 213.

CHAP who had remained at Rome, infensibly communicated to each other their complaints and apprehenfions. The emperors chosen by the army had perished with ignominy; those elected by the senate were feated on the throne 42. The long difcord between the civil and military powers was decided by a war, in which the former had obtained a complete victory. The foldiers must now learn a new doctrine of submission to the senate; and whatever clemency was affected by that politic affembly, they dreaded a flow revenge, coloured by the name of discipline, and justified by fair pretences of the public good. But their fate was still in their own hands; and if they had courage to despise the vain terrors of an impotent republic, it was eafy to convince the world, that those who were masters of the arms, were mafters of the authority, of the

Maximus and Balbinus.

Massacreof When the senate elected two princes, it is probable that, besides the declared reason of providing for the various emergencies of peace and war, they were actuated by the fecret defire of weakening by division the despotism of the supreme magistrate. Their policy was effectual, but it proved fatal both to their emperors and to themselves. The jealousy of power was soon exasperated by the difference of character. Maximus despised Balbinus as a luxurious noble, and was in his turn disdained by his colleague as an

obscure

f

C

n tl

in

fo

th

sh

gl

po

la

fto

⁴² The observation had been made imprudently enough in the acclamations of the fenate, and with regard to the foldiers it carried the appearance of a wanton infult. Hift. August. p. 170.

obscure soldier. Their silent discord was under- CHAP. flood rather than feen 43; but the mutual consciousness prevented them from uniting in any vigorous measures of defence against their comwhole city was employed in the Capitoline

July 15:

mon enemies of the Prætorian camp. The games, and the emperors were left almost alone in the palace. On a fudden they were alarmed A. D.238. by the approach of a troop of desperate assaffins. Ignorant of each other's fituation or defigns, for they already occupied very distant apartments, afraid to give or to receive affiftance, they wasted the important moments in idle debates and fruitless recriminations. The arrival of the guards put an end to the vain strife. They seized on these emperors of the fenate, for such they called them with malicious contempt, stripped them of their garments, and dragged them in infolent triumph through the streets of Rome, with a design of inflicting a flow and cruel death on these unfortunate princes. The fear of a rescue from the faithful Germans of the Imperial guards, shortened their tortures; and their bodies, mangled with a thousand wounds, were left ex-

posed to the infults or to the pity of the popu-

lace 44

⁴³ Discordiæ tacitæ, et quæ intelligerentur potius quam viderenfur. Hift. August. p. 170. This well-chosen expression is probably stolen from some better writer.

⁴⁴ Herodian, l. viii. p. 287, 288.

THE DECLINE AND FALL

CHAP. VII. The third Gordian remains fole emperor. In the space of a sew months, six princes had been cut off by the sword. Gordian, who had already received the title of Cæsar, was the only person that occurred to the soldiers as proper to fill the vacant throne 45. They carried him to the camp, and unanimously saluted him Augustus and Emperor. His name was dear to the senate and people; his tender age promised a long impunity of military licence; and the submission of Rome and the provinces to the choice of the Prætorian guards, saved the republic, at the expence indeed of its freedom and dignity, from the horrors of a new civil war in the heart of the capital 46.

Innocence and virtues of Gordian. As the third Gordian was only nineteen years of age at the time of his death, the history of his life, were it known to us with greater accuracy than it really is, would contain little more than the account of his education, and the conduct of the ministers, who by turns abused or guided the simplicity of his unexperienced youth. Immediately after his accession, he fell into the hands of

45 Quia non alius erat in præsenti, is the expression of the Augustan History.

46 Quintus Curtius (l. x. c. 9.) pays an elegant compliment to the emperor of the day, for having, by his happy accession, extinguished so many firebrands, sheathed so many swords, and put an end to the evils of a divided government. After weighing with attention every word of the passage, I am of opinion, that it suits better with the elevation of Gordian, than with any other period of the Roman History. In that case, it may serve to decide the age of Quintus Curtius. Those who place him under the first Cæsars, argue from the purity of his style, but are embarrassed by the silence of Quintilian, in his accurate list of Roman historians.

h

tl

ir

ra

di

P

· di

fo

pı

ki

de

fla

ni

th

th

in

dia

of

the

T

are

dig

and

and

am

anc

tun

47

fhou

out f

appr

his mother's eunuchs, that pernicious vermin of CHAP. the East, who, since the days of Elagabalus, had VII. infested the Roman palace. By the artful conspiracy of these wretches, an impenetrable veil was drawn between an innocent prince and his oppressed subjects, the virtuous disposition of Gordian was deceived, and the honours of the empire fold without his knowledge, though in a very public manner, to the most worthless of mankind. We are ignorant by what fortunate accident the emperor escaped from this ignominious flavery, and devolved his confidence on a minister, whose wife counsels had no object except the glory of his fovereign, and the happiness of the people. It should seem that love and learn- A.D. 240. ing introduced Misitheus to the favour of Gor- Adminidian. The young prince married the daughter Mifitheus. of his mafter of rhetoric, and promoted his father-in-law to the first offices of the empire. Two admirable letters that passed between them, are still extant. The minister, with the conscious dignity of virtue, congratulates Gordian that he is delivered from the tyranny of the eunuchs 47. and still more that he is sensible of his deliver-The emperor acknowledges, with an amiable confusion, the errors of his past conduct; and laments, with fingular propriety, the misfortune of a monarch, from whom a venal tribe of

47 Hift. August. p. 161. From some hints in the two letters, I should expect that the eunuchs were not expelled the palace, without some degree of gentle violence, and that young Gordian rather approved of, than confented to, their difgrace,

CHAP. courtiers perpetually labour to conceal the

The Perfian war. A. D. 242.

The life of Misitheus had been spent in the profession of letters, not of arms; yet such was the versatile genius of that great man, that, when he was appointed Prætorian Præfed, he difcharged the military duties of his place with vigour and ability. The Persians had invaded Mesopotamia, and threatened Antioch. By the perfuation of his father-in-law, the young emperor quitted the luxury of Rome, opened, for the last time recorded in history, the temple of Janus, and marched in person into the East. On his approach with a great army, the Persians withdrew their garrisons from the cities which they had already taken, and retired from the Euphrates to the Tigris. Gordian enjoyed the pleafure of announcing to the fenate the first success of his arms, which he ascribed with a becoming modesty and gratitude to the wisdom of his father and Præfect. During the whole expedition, Misitheus watched over the safety and discipline of the army; whilft he prevented their dangerous murmurs by maintaining a regular plenty in the camp, and by establishing ample magazines of vinegar, bacon, straw, barley, and wheat, in all the cities of the frontier 49. But the prosperity.

t

to

P

n

b

al

W

P

Ct

fe

A

m

CC

A

en

ob

th

fro

eraf

tion

of o

Juli

nus

Was

⁴⁸ Duxit uxorem filiam Misithei, quem causa eloquentiæ dignum parentela sua putavit; et præsectum statim secit; post quod, non puerile jam et contemptibile videbatur imperium.

⁴⁹ Hist. August. p. 162. Aurelius Victor. Porphyrius in Vit. Plotin. ap. Fabricium Biblioth. Græc. l. iv. c. 36. The philosopher Plotinus accompanied the army, prompted by the love of knowledge, and by the hope of penetrating as far as India.

of Gordian expired with Misitheus, who died of CHAP. a flux, not without very strong suspicions of poifon. Philip, his fuccessor in the præsecture, was A.D. 243. an Arab by birth, and confequently, in the earlier Arts of Philip. part of his life, a robber by profession. His rise from so obscure a station to the first dignities of the empire, feems to prove that he was a bold and able leader. But his boldness prompted him to aspire to the throne, and his abilities were employed to supplant, not to serve, his indulgent master. The minds of the soldiers were irritated by an artificial fearcity, created by his contrivance in the camp; and the diffress of the army was attributed to the youth and incapacity of the prince. It is not in our power to trace the fucceffive steps of the secret conspiracy and open fedition, which were at length fatal to Gordian. A sepulchral monument was erected to his me- Murder of mory on the spot so where he was killed, near the A.D. 244. conflux of the Euphrates with the little river March. Aboras 51. The fortunate Philip, raifed to the empire by the votes of the foldiers, found a ready obedience from the senate and the provinces 52.

We cannot forbear transcribing the ingenious, Form of a though fomewhat fanciful description, which a republic.

⁵⁰ About twenty miles from the little town of Circefium, on the frontier of the two empires.

⁵¹ The inscription (which contained a very singular pun) was erased by the order of Licinius, who claimed some degree of relationship to Philip (Hist. August. p. 165.); but the tumulus or mound of earth which formed the sepulchre, still subsisted in the time of Julian. See Ammian. Marcellin. xxiii. 5.

⁵² Aurelius Victor. Eutrop. ix. 2. Orosius, vii. 20. Ammianus Marcellinus, xxiii. 5. Zosimus, 1. i. p. 19. Philip, who was a native of Bostra, was about forty years of age.

CHAP, celebrated writer of our own times has traced of the military government of the Roman empire. " What in that age was called the Roman em-" pire, was only an irregular republic, not unlike " the Aristocracy 53 of Algiers 54, where the mi-" litia, possessed of the sovereignty, creates and " deposes a magistrate, who is styled a Dev. " Perhaps, indeed, it may be laid down as a " general rule, that a military government is, in or some respects, more republican than monar-" chical. Nor can it be faid that the foldiers " only partook of the government by their difo-" bedience and rebellions. The speeches made " to them by the emperors, were they not at " length of the same nature as those formerly se pronounced to the people by the confuls and " the tribunes? And although the armies had " no regular place or forms of affembly; though their debates were short, their action sudden, and their resolves seldom the result of cool rese flection, did they not dispose, with absolute " fway, of the public fortune? What was the " emperor, except the minister of a violent go-" vernment elected for the private benefit of the " foldiers?

" When the army had elected Philip, who was " Prætorian præfect to the third Gordian; the

er latter

⁵³ Can the epithet of Aristocracy be applied, with any propriety, to the government of Algiers? Every military government floats between the extremes of absolute monarchy and wild democracy.

⁵⁴ The military republic of the Mamalukes in Egypt, would have afforded M. de Montesquieu (see Considerations sur la Grandeur et la Decadence des Romains, c. 16.) a juster and more noble parallel,

" latter demanded, that he might remain fole CHA P. " emperor; he was unable to obtain it. He re-" quested, that the power might be equally di-" vided between them; the army would not liften " to his speech. He consented to be degraded to the rank of Cæsar; the favour was refused " him. He defired, at least, he might be ap-" pointed Prætorian præfect; his prayer was re-" jected. Finally, he pleaded for his life. The " army, in these several judgments, exercised the " fupreme magistracy." According to the hiftorian, whose doubtful narrative the president De Montesquieu has adopted, Philip, who, during the whole transaction, had preserved a sullen filence, was inclined to spare the innocent life of his benefactor; till, recollecting that his innocence might excite a dangerous compassion in the Roman world; he commanded, without regard to his suppliant cries, that he should be seized, ftript, and led away to instant death. After a moment's pause the inhuman sentence was executed 55.

On his return from the east to Rome, Philip, Reign of desirous of obliterating the memory of his crimes, and of captivating the affections of the people,

55 The Augustan History (p. 163, 164.) cannot, in this instance, be reconciled with itself or with probability. How could Philip condemn his predecessor, and yet consecrate his memory? How could he order his public execution, and yet, in his letters to the fenate, exculpate himself from the guilt of his death? Philip, though an ambitious usurper, was by no means a mad tyrant. Some chronological difficulties have likewise been discovered by the nice eyes of Tillemont and Muratori, in this supposed affociation of Philip to the empire.

X 4

folem-

Secular games. A. D. 248. April 21.

C HAP. folemnized the fecular games with infinite pomp and magnificence. Since their institution or revival by Augustus 56, they had been celebrated by Claudius, by Domitian, and by Severus, and were now renewed the fifth time, on the accomplishment of the full period of a thousand years from the foundation of Rome. Every circumstance of the fecular games was skilfully adapted to inspire the superstitious mind with deep and folemn reverence. The long interval between them 57 exceeded the term of human life; and as none of the spectators had already seen them, none could flatter themselves with the expectation of beholding them a second time, The mystic facrifices were performed, during three nights, on the banks of the Tyber; and the Campus Martius resounded with music and dances, and was illuminated with innumerable lamps and torches. Slaves and ftrangers were excluded from any participation in these national ceremonies. A chorus of twenty-seven youths, and as many virgins, of noble families, and whose parents were both alive, implored the propitious gods in favour of the present, and for the hope

h

0

2

t

1

⁵⁶ The account of the last supposed celebration, though in an enlightened period of history, was fo very doubtful and obscure, that the alternative seems not doubtful. When the popish jubilees, the copy of the fecular games, were invented by Boniface VIII. the crafty pope pretended, that he only revived an ancient institution. See M. le Chais Lettres sur les Jubilès. bilding and astro so hears

⁵⁷ Either of a hundred, or a hundred and ten years. Varro and Livy adopted the former opinion, but the infallible authority of the Sibyl confecrated the latter (Cenforinus de Die Natal. c. 17.). The emperors Claudius and Philip, however, did not treat the oracle with implicit respect.

of the rifing generation; requesting, in religious C HAP. hymns, that, according to the faith of their ancient oracles, they would still maintain the virtue, the felicity, and the empire of the Roman people. The magnificence of Philip's shows and entertainments dazzled the eyes of the multitude. The devout were employed in the rites of superstition, whilst the resecting few revolved in their anxious minds the past history and the suture sate of the empire.

Since Romulus, with a small band of shepherds Decline of the Roman and outlaws, fortified himself on the hills near empire.

and outlaws, fortified himself on the hills near the Tiber, ten centuries had already elapsed 32. During the sour first ages, the Romans, in the laborious school of poverty, had acquired the virtues of war and government: By the vigorous exertion of those virtues, and by the assistance of sortune, they had obtained, in the course of the three succeeding centuries, an absolute empire over many countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The last three hundred years had been consumed in apparent prosperity and internal decline. The nation of soldiers, magistrates, and legislators, who composed the thirty-five tribes of the Roman people, was dissolved into the common mass of mankind, and consounded with the millions of servile provincials, who had received the name,

of Horace, and the description of Zosimus, l. ii. p. 167, &c.

⁵⁹ The received calculation of Varro assigns to the foundation of Rome, an æra that corresponds with the 754th year before Christ. But so little is the chronology of Rome to be depended on, in the more early ages, that Sir Isaac Newton has brought the same event as low as the year 627.

CHAP. without adopting the spirit of Romans. A mercenary army, levied among the subjects and barbarians of the frontier, was the only order of men who preferved and abused their independence. By their tumultuary election, a Syrian, a Goth, or an Arab, was exalted to the throne of Rome, and invefted with despotic power over the conquests and over the country of the Scipios.

The limits of the Roman empire still extended from the Western Ocean to the Tigris, and from Mount Atlas to the Rhine and the Danube. To the undiscerning eye of the vulgar, Philip appeared a monarch no less powerful than Hadrian or Augustus had formerly been. The form was fill the same, but the animating health and vigour were fled. The industry of the people was discouraged and exhausted by a long series of oppression. The discipline of the legions, which alone, after the extinction of every other virtue, had propped the greatness of the state, was corrupted by the ambition, or relaxed by the weakness, of the emperors. The strength of the frontiers, which had always confifted in arms rather than in fortifications, was infenfibly undermined; and the fairest provinces were left exposed to the rapaciousness or ambition of the barbarians, who foon discovered the decline of the Roman empire.

of the month of the contract o Sometimber of the control of the transfer of the second of

CALL BUILDING THE RECEIVED AND THE SECRETARIES

which allowed to the w kinous

o entre de la la company de la

skofferundelmeila prometik katuvet sede b CHAP. VIII.

Of the State of Persia after the Restoration of the Monarchy by Artaxerxes.

TIHENEVER Tacitus indulges himfelf CHAP. in those beautiful episodes, in which he relates some domestic transaction of the Germans The bar-barians of or of the Parthians, his principal object is to re- the East lieve the attention of the reader from a uniform North. scene of vice and misery. From the reign of Augustus to the time of Alexander Severus, the enemies of Rome were in her bosom; the tyrants, and the foldiers; and her prosperity had a very distant and feeble interest in the revolutions that might happen beyond the Rhine and the Euphrates. But when the military order had levelled, in wild anarchy, the power of the prince, the laws of the senate, and even the discipline of the camp, the barbarians of the north and of the east, who had long hovered on the frontier, boldly attacked the provinces of a declining monarchy. Their vexatious inroads were changed into formidable irruptions, and, after a long vicissitude of mutual calamities, many tribes of the victorious invaders established themselves in the provinces of the Roman empire. To obtain a clearer knowledge of these great events, we shall endeavour to form a previous idea of the character, forces, and defigns of those nations who avenged the cause of Hannibal and Mithridates.

VIII. Revolutions of Afia.

CHAP. In the more early ages of the world, whilft the forest that covered Europe afforded a retreat to a few wandering favages, the inhabitants of Afia were already collected into populous cities, and reduced under extensive empires, the feat of the arts, of luxury, and of despotism. The Assyrians reigned over the east', till the sceptre of Ninus and Semiramis dropt from the hands of their enervated fucceffors. The Medes and the Babylonians divided their power, and were themselves swallowed up in the monarchy of the Persians, whose arms could not be confined within the narrow limits of Asia. Followed, as it is said, by two millions of men, Xerxes, the descendant of Cyrus, invaded Greece. Thirty thousand foldiers, under the command of Alexander, the fon of Philip, who was intrusted by the Greeks with their glory and revenge, were fufficient to fubdue Persia. The princes of the house of Seleucus usurped and lost the Macedonian command over the East. About the same time, that, by an ignominious treaty, they refigned to the Romans the country on this fide Mount Taurus, they were driven by the Parthians, an obscure horde of Scythian origin, from all the provinces of Upper Asia. The formidable power of the Par-

thians,

^{*} An ancient chronologist quoted by Velleius Paterculus (l. i. c. 6.) observes, that the Affyrians, the Medes, the Persians, and the Macedonians, reigned over Asia one thousand nine hundred and ninety-five years, from the accession of Ninus to the defeat of Antiochus by the Romans. As the latter of these great events happened 289 years before Christ, the former may be placed 2184 years before the same æra. The Astronomical Observations, found at Babylon by Alexander, went fifty years higher.

thians, which spread from India to the frontiers CHAP. of Syria, was in its turn subverted by Ardshir, or Artaxerxes; the founder of a new dynasty, which, under the name of Sassanides, governed Persia till the invasion of the Arabs. This great revolution, whose fatal influence was soon experienced by the Romans, happened in the fourth year of Alexander Severus, two hundred and twenty-fix years after the Christian æra2.

Artaxerxes had ferved with great reputation in The Perthe armies of Artaban, the last king of the Par- fian mothians, and it appears that he was driven into flored by exile and rebellion by royal ingratitude, the cuf- xerxes. tomary reward for superior merit. His birth was obscure, and the obscurity equally gave room to the aspersions of his enemies, and the flattery of his adherents. If we credit the scandal of the former, Artaxerxes sprang from the illegitimate commerce of a tanner's wife with a common foldier3. The latter represent him, as descended from a branch of the ancient kings of Persia, though time and misfortune had gradually reduced his ancestors to the humble station of pri-

^{*} In the five hundred and thirty-eighth year of the æra of Seleucus. See Agathias, l. ii. p. 63. This great event (fuch is the carelessness of the Orientals) is placed by Eutychius, as high as the tenth year of Commodus, and by Moses of Chorene, as low as the reign of Philip. Ammianus Marcellinus has fo fervilely copied (xxiii. 6.) his ancient materials, which are indeed very good, that he describes the family of the Arsacides, as still seated on the Perfian throne in the middle of the fourth century.

³ The tanner's name was Babec; the foldier's, Sassan: from the former Artaxerxes obtained the furname of Babegan; from the latter all his descendants have been styled Saffanides,

CHAP. vate citizens . As the lineal heir of the monar? chy, he afferted his right to the throne, and challenged the noble task of delivering the Persians from the oppression under which they groaned above five centuries fince the death of Darius. The Parthians were defeated in three great battles. In the last of these their king Artaban was flain, and the spirit of the nation was for ever broken 5. The authority of Artaxerxes was folemnly acknowledged in a great affembly held at Balch in Khorasan. Two younger branches of the royal house of Arfaces were confounded among the proftrate fatraps. A third, more mindful of ancient grandeur than of present neceffity, attempted to retire, with a numerous train of vaffals, towards their kinfinan, the king of Armenia; but this little army of deferters was intercepted, and cut off, by the vigilance of the conqueror 6, who boldly assumed the double diadem, and the title of King of Kings, which had been enjoyed by his predecessor. But these pompous titles, instead of gratifying the vanity of the Persian, served only to admonish him of his duty, and to inflame in his foul the ambition of restoring, in their full splendour, the religion and empire of Cyrus.

Reformation of the Magian religion.

1. During the long servitude of Persia under the Macedonian and the Parthian yoke, the nations of Europe and Asia had mutually adopted

5

21

N

V

n

10

F

ir

C

g

C

a

10

u

1

⁴ D'Herbelot. Bibliotheque Orientale. Ardfbir.

⁵ Dion Cassius, l. lxxx. Herodian, l. vi. p. 207. Abulpharagius Dynast. p. 80.

⁶ See Moses Chorenensis, 1. ii. c. 65-71.

and corrupted each other's superstitions. The CHAP. Arfacides, indeed, practifed the worship of the Magi; but they difgraced and polluted it with a various mixture of foreign idolatry. The memory of Zoroaster, the ancient prophet and philosopher of the Persians, was still revered in the East; but the obsolete and mysterious language, in which the Zendavesta was composed 3, opened a field of dispute to seventy sects, who variously explained the fundamental doctrines of their religion, and were all indifferently derided by a crowd of infidels, who rejected the divine mission and miracles of the prophet. To suppress the idolaters, reunite the schismatics, and confute the unbelievers, by the infallible decision of a general council, the pious Artaxerxes fummoned the Magi from all parts of his dominions. priefts, who had fo long fighed in contempt and obscurity, obeyed the welcome summons; and on the appointed day appeared, to the number of about eighty thousand. But as the debates of

7 Hyde and Prideaux, working up the Persian legends and their own conjectures into a very agreeable story, represent Zoroaster as a contemporary of Darius Hystaspes. But it is sufficient to observe, that the Greek writers, who lived almost in the age of Darius, agree in placing the æra of Zoroaster many hundred, or even thousand, years before their own time. The judicious criticism of Mr. Moyle perceived, and maintained against his uncle Dr. Prideaux, the antiquity of the Persian prophet. See his work, vol. ii.

8 That ancient idiom was called the Zend. The language of the commentary, the Pehlvi, though much more modern, has ceased many ages ago to be a living tongue. This fact alone (if it is allowed as authentic) sufficiently warrants the antiquity of those writings, which M, d'Anquetil has brought into Europe, and translated

into French.

CHAP. fo tumultuous an affembly could not have been directed by the authority of reason, or influenced by the art of policy, the Persian synod was reduced, by successive operations, to forty thoufand, to four thousand, to four hundred, to forty, and at last to seven Magi, the most respected for their learning and piety. One of these, Erdaviraph, a young but holy prelate, received from the hands of his brethren three cups of soporiferous wine. He drank them off, and instantly fell into a long and profound sleep. As foon as he waked, he related to the king and to the believing multitude, his journey to Heaven, and his intimate conferences with the Deity. Every doubt was filenced by this supernatural evidence; and the articles of the faith of Zoroaster were fixed with equal authority and precision . A short delineation of that celebrated system will be found useful, not only to display the character of the Persian nation, but to illustrate many of their most important transactions, both in peace and war, with the Roman empire 10.

Persian theology; two principles.

The great and fundamental article of the syftem, was the celebrated doctrine of the two principles; a bold and injudicious attempt of Eastern philosophy to reconcile the existence of moral

C

P T

Ċ fa

B

P

B

0 th

ru

ev

ge

m

⁹ Hyde de Religione veterum Perf. c. 21.

to I have principally drawn this account from the Zendavesta of M. d'Anquetil, and the Sadder, subjoined to Dr. Hyde's treatise. It must, however, be confessed, that the studied obscurity of a prophet, the figurative ftyle of the East, and the deceitful medium of a French or Latin version, may have betrayed us into error and herefy, in this abridgement of Persian theology.

and physical evil, with the attributes of a benefit CHAP. cent Creator and Governor of the world. The first and original Being, in whom, or by whom, the universe exists, is denominated in the writings of Zoroaster, Time without bounds; but it must be confessed, that this infinite substance seems rather a metaphyfical abstraction of the mind, than a real object endowed with felf-confciousness, or possessed of moral perfections. From either the blind, or the intelligent operation of this infinite Time, which bears but too near an affinity with the chaos of the Greeks, the two fecondary but active principles of the universe, were from all eternity produced, Ormusd and Ahriman, each of them poffessed of the powers of creation, but each disposed, by his invariable nature, to exercise them with different deligns. The principle of good is eternally absorbed in light; the principle of evil eternally buried in darkness. The wife benevolence of Ormuld formed man capable of virtue, and abundantly provided his fair habitation with the materials of happiness. By his vigilant providence, the motion of the planets, the order of the feafons, and the temperate mixture of the elements, are preferved. But the malice of Ahriman has long fince pierced Ormusa's egg; or, in other words, has violated the harmony of his works. Since that fatal irruption, the most minute articles of good and evil are intimately intermingled and agitated together; the rankest poisons spring up amidst the most falutary plants; deluges, earthquakes, and Vol. I. confla-

CHAP. conflagrations, attest the conflict of Nature, and the little world of man is perpetually shaken by vice and misfortune. Whilft the rest of human kind are led away captives in the chains of their infernal enemy, the faithful Persian alone reserves his religious adoration for his friend and protector Ormufd, and fights under his banner of light, in the full confidence that he shall, in the last day, share the glory of his triumph. At that decifive period, the enlightened wisdom of goodness will render the power of Ormuld superior to the furious malice of his rival. Ahriman and his followers, difarmed and fubdued, will fink into their native darkness; and virtue will maintain the eternal peace and harmony of the universe ".

Religious worship.

and and

top pale

conflic

The theology of Zoroaster was darkly comprehended by foreigners, and even by the far greater number of his disciples; but the most careless observers were struck with the philosophic simplicity of the Persian worship. "That people, " fays Herodotus 12, rejects the use of temples, " of altars, and of statues, and smiles at the folly " of those nations, who imagine that the gods " are forung from, or bear any affinity with, the human nature. The tops of the highest moun-

t

e

tic

th

brimus has long liscopioned 11 The modern Persees (and in some degree the Sadder) exalt Ormusd into the first and omnipotent cause, whilst they degrade Ahriman into an inferior but rebellious spirit. Their desire of pleasing the Mahometans may have contributed to refine their theological lyftem. a han haloming led a minute day

¹² Herodotus, l. i. c. 131. But Dr. Prideaux thinks, with reason, that the use of temples was afterwards permitted in the Magian religion: Action carried with their

" tains are the places chosen for facrifices. Hymns CHAP. " and prayers are the principal worship; the " Supreme God who fills the wide circle of Hea-" ven, is the object to whom they are addressed." Yet, at the same time, in the true spirit of a polytheift, he accuses them of adoring Earth, Water, Fire, the Winds, and the Sun and Moon. But the Persians of every age have denied the charge, and explained the equivocal conduct, which might appear to give a colour to it. The elements, and more particularly Fire, Light, and the Sun, whom they called Mithra, were the objects of their religious reverence, because they confidered them as the purest symbols, the noblest productions, and the most powerful agents of the Divine Power and Nature 13.

Every mode of religion, to make a deep and Ceremolasting impression on the human mind, must ex- nies and ercise our obedience, by enjoining practices of cepts. devotion, for which we can affign no reason; and must acquire our esteem, by inculcating moral duties analogous to the dictates of our own hearts. The religion of Zoroaster was abundantly provided with the former, and possessed a sufficient portion of the latter. At the age of puberty, the faithful Persian was invested with a mysterious girdle, the badge of the divine protection; and from that moment, all the actions of his life, even the most indifferent, or the most necessary,

¹³ Hyde de Relig. Perf. c. 8. Notwithstanding all their distinctions and protestations, which seem sincere enough, their tyrants. the Mahometans, have constantly stigmatised them, as idolatrous worshippers of the Fire.

C HAP. were fanctified by their peculiar prayers, ejaculations, or genuflexions; the omission of which, under any circumflances, was a grievous fin, not inferior in guilt to the violation of the moral duties. The moral duties, however, of justice, mercy, liberality, &c. were in their turn required of the disciple of Zoroaster, who wished to escape the persecution of Ahriman, and to live with Ormused in a blissful eternity, where the degree of felicity will be exactly proportioned to the degree of virtue and piety 14.

Encouragement of agriculture.

-sag linsom

WEIC

But there are some remarkable instances, in which Zoroaster lays aside the prophet, assumes the legislator, and discovers a liberal concern for private and public happiness, seldom to be found among the groveling or visionary schemes of fuperstition. Fasting and celibacy, the common means of purchasing the Divine favour, he condemns with abhorrence, as a criminal rejection of the best gifts of Providence. The faint, in the Magian religion, is obliged to beget children, to plant ufeful trees, to destroy noxious animals, to convey water to the dry lands of Persia, and to work out his salvation by purfuing all the labours of agriculture. We may quote from the Zendavesta a wife and benevolent maxim, which compensates for many an abfurdity. He who fows the ground with even the most indifferent, or the most necessary.

cc care

60

..

tl

k

m

h

th

01

fa

in

Wi

"

"

...

23

66

66

Inc

po

bu

roy

pri

pri

bly

WO

15

tom

16

¹⁴ See the Sadder, the smallest part of which consists of moral precepts. The ceremonies enjoined are infinite and trifling. Fifteen genufications, prayers, &c. were required whenever the devout Persian cut his nails or made water; or as often as he put on the facred girdle. Sadder, Art. 14. 50. 60.

care and diligence, acquires a greater flock GHAP. " of religious merit, than he could gain by the " repetition of ten thousand prayers "." In the foring of every year a festival was celebrated, deftined to represent the primitive equality, and the present connexion, of mankind. The stately kings of Persia, exchanging their vain pomp for more genuine greatness, freely mingled with the humblest but most useful of their subjects. On that day the husbandmen were admitted, without distinction, to the table of the king and his fatraps. The monarch accepted their petitions, inquired into their grievances, and converfed with them on the most equal terms. "From " your labours, was he accustomed to say (and " to fay with truth, if not with fincerity), from " your labours, we receive our sublistence; you " derive your tranquility from our vigilance; " fince, therefore, we are mutually necessary to " each other, let us live together like brothers " in concord and love 16." Such a festival must indeed have degenerated, in a wealthy and defpotic empire, into a theatrical representation; but it was at least a comedy well worthy of a royal audience, and which might fometimes imprint a falutary lesson on the mind of a young prince. sayah samadai sii ana ani ani ani ani ani ani ani

Had Zoroaster, in all his institutions, invaria- Power of bly supported this exalted character, his name would deferve a place with those of Numa and

the Magi.

¹⁵ Zendavesta, tom. i. p. 224. and Precis du Systeme de Zoroastre, tom. iii. at my lathy or hor blat con

¹⁶ Hyde de Religione Perfarum, c. 19.

CHAP. Confucius, and his system would be justly entitled to all the applause, which it has pleased some of our Divines, and even fome of our philosophers, to bestow on it. But in that motley composition, dictated by reason and passion, by enthusiasin and by felfish motives, some useful and fublime truths were difgraced by a mixture of the most abject and dangerous superstition. The Magi, or facerdotal order, were extremely numerous, fince, as we have already feen, fourfcore thousand of them were convened in a general council. Their forces were multiplied by discipline. A regular hierarchy was diffused through all the provinces of Persia; and the Archimagus, who refided at Balch, was respected as the visible head of the church, and the lawful succeffor of Zoroaster 17. The property of the Magi was very considerable. Besides the less invidious possession of a large tract of the most fertile lands of Media 18, they levied a general tax on the fortunes and the industry of the Persians 19. " Though your good works," fays the interested prophet, " exceed in number the leaves of the

¹⁷ Hyde de Religione Persarum, c. 28. Both Hyde and Prideaux affect to apply to the Magian, the terms confecrated to the Christian hierarchy.

¹⁸ Ammian. Marcellin. xxiii. 6. He informs us (as far as we may credit him) of two curious particulars; 1. that the Magi derived some of their most secret doctrines from the Indian Brachmans; and, 2. that they were a tribe or family, as well as order.

¹⁹ The divine inftitution of tythes exhibits a fingular inftance of conformity between the law of Zoroaster and that of Moses. Those who cannot otherwise account for it, may suppose, if they please, that the Magi of the latter times inferted fo useful an interpolation into the writings of their prophet.

trees, the drops of rain, the stars in the hea- C HAP.

" all be unprofitable to you, unless they are accepted by the destour, or priest. To obtain

)-

d

of

le

1-

re

al

1-

h

1-

ie

C-

gi

15

ds

ne

9

ed

ne

ux

an

we

de-

19;

of

ofe

fe,

on

28,

" the acceptation of this guide to falvation, you

" must faithfully pay him tythes of all you pos-

" fels, of your goods, of your lands, and of your

" money. If the destour be fatisfied, your foul

" will escape hell tortures; you will secure praise

" in this world, and happiness in the next. For

" the destours are the teachers of religion; they

" know all things, and they deliver all men 20."

These convenient maxims of reverence and implicit faith were doubtless imprinted with care on the tender minds of youth; fince the Magi were the masters of education in Persia, and to their hands the children even of the royal family were intrusted ". The Persian priests, who were of a speculative genius, preserved and investigated the secrets of Oriental philosophy; and acquired, either by fuperior knowledge or fuperior art, the reputation of being well versed in fome occult sciences, which have derived their appellation from the Magi 22. Those of more active dispositions mixed with the world in courts and cities; and it is observed, that the administration of Artaxerxes was in a great measure directed by the counsels of the facerdotal order, whose dignity, either from policy or devotion, that prince restored to its ancient splendour 23.

²⁰ Sadder, Art. 8. 21 Plato in Alcibiad.

²² Pliny (Hist. Natur. l. xxx. c. 1.) observes, that magic held mankind by the triple chain of religion, of physic, and of astronomy.

⁴³ Agathias, l. iv. p. 134.

Spirit of perfecution.

The first counsel of the Magi was agreeable to the unfociable genius of their faith 24, to the practice of ancient kings 23 and even to the example of their legislator, who had fallen a victim to a religious war, excited by his own intolerant zeal 26. By an edict of Artaxerxes, the exercise of every worship, except that of Zoroaster, was feverely prohibited. The temples of the Parthians, and the statues of their deified monarchs, were thrown down with ignominy ?7. The fword of Aristotle (such was the name given by the Orientals to the polytheifm and philosophy of the Greeks) was easily broken 28; the slaines of perfecution foon reached the more stubborn Jews and Christians 29; nor did they spare the heretics of their own nation and religion. The majesty of Ormusd, who was jealous of a rival, was feconded by the despotisin of Artaxerxes, who could not fuffer a rebel; and the schismatics within his vast empire were soon reduced to the inconsiderable number of eighty thousand 3°. This spirit

²⁴ Mr. Hume, in the Natural History of Religion, fagaciously remarks, that the most refined and philosophic sects are constantly the most intolerant.

²⁵ Cicero de Legibus, ii. 10. Xerxes, by the advice of the Magi, destroyed the temples of Greece.

²⁶ Hyde de Rel. Persar. c. 23, 24. D'Herbelot Bibliothéque Orientale Zerduße. Life of Zoroaster in tom. ii. of the Zendavesta.

²⁷ Compare Moses of Chorene, l. ii. c. 74. with Ammian. Marcellin. xxiii. 6. Hereaster I shall make use of these passages.

²⁸ Rabbi Abraham in the Tarikh Schickard, p. 108, 109.

²⁹ Basnage Histoire des Juis, 1. viii. c. 3. Sozomen, 1. ii. c. 7. Manes, who suffered an ignominious death, may be deemed a Magian, as well as a Christian heretic.

³⁰ Hyde de Religione Perfar. c. 21.

of perfecution reflects dishonour on the religion CHAP, of Zoroaster; but as it was not productive of any civil commotion, it served to strengthen the new monarchy, by uniting all the various inhabitants of Persia in the bands of religious zeal.

II. Artaxerxes, by his valour and conduct, Establishhad wrested the sceptre of the East from the an- royal aucient royal family of Parthia. There still remain- thority in the proed the more difficult talk of establishing, through- vinces, out the vast extent of Persia, a uniform and vigorous administration. The weak indulgence of the Arfacides, had refigned to their fons and brothers the principal provinces, and the greatest offices of the kingdom, in the nature of hereditary possessions. The vitaxa, or eighteen most powerful fatraps, were permitted to assume the regal title; and the vain pride of the monarch was delighted with a nominal dominion over fo many vassal kings. Even tribes of barbarians in their mountains, and the Greek cities of Upper Asia 31, within their walls, scarcely acknowledged, or feldom obeyed, any fuperior; and the Parthian empire exhibited, under other names, a lively image of the feudal fystem 32 which has fince prevailed in Europe. But the active vic-

31 These colonies were extremely numerous. Seleucus Nicator founded thirty-nine cities, all named from himself, or some of his relations (see Appian in Syriac. p. 124.). The æra of Seleucus (still in use among the Eastern Christians) appears as late as the year 508, of Christ 196, on the medals of the Greek cities within the Parthian empire. See Moyle's works, vol. i. p. 273, &c. and M. Freret, Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xix.

32 The modern Persians diffinguish that period as the dynasty of the kings of the nations. See Plin. Hift. Nat. vi. 25.

CHAP. tor, at the head of a numerous and disciplined army, visited in person every province of Persia. The defeat of the boldest rebels, and the reduction of the strongest fortifications 33, diffused the terror of his arms, and prepared the way for the peaceful reception of his authority. An obstinate refistance was fatal to the chiefs; but their followers were treated with lenity 34. A cheerful fubmission was rewarded with honours and riches: but the prudent Artaxerxes, fuffering no person except himself to assume the title of king, abolished every intermediate power between the Extent and throne and the people. His kingdom, nearly equal in extent to modern Persia, was, on every fide, bounded by the fea or by great rivers; by the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Araxes, the Oxus, and the Indus, by the Caspian Sea, and the Gulph of Persia 35. That country was computed or any delial conserve to the table of a deliant to

population of Persia.

> 33 Eutychius (tom. i. p. 367. 371. 375.) relates the fiege of the island of Mesene in the Tigris, with some circumstances not unlike the story of Nisus and Scylla.

Letterney on a mand due Green comme and payage

34 Agathias, ii. 164. The princes of Segestan defended their independence during many years. As romances generally transport to an ancient period the events of their own time, it is not impossible, that the fabulous exploits of Rustan prince of Segestan may have been grafted on this real history.

35 We can scarcely attribute to the Persian monarchy the sea coast of Gedrosia or Macran, which extends along the Indian Ocean from Cape Jask (the promontory Capella) to Cape Goadel. In the time of Alexander, and probably many ages afterwards, it was thinly inhabited by a favage people of Icthyophagi, or Fishermen, who knew no arts, who acknowledged no mafter, and who were divided by inhospitable deserts from the rest of the world. (See Arrian de Reb. Indicis.) In the twelfth century, the little town of Taiz (fupposed by M. d'Anville to be the Tesa of Ptolemy) was peopled and enriched

to contain, in the last century, five hundred and CHAP. fifty-four cities, fixty thousand villages, and about forty millions of fouls 36. If we compare the administration of the house of Sassan with that of the house of Sefi, the political influence of the Magian with that of the Mahometan religion, we shall probably infer, that the kingdom of Artaxerxes contained at least as great a number of cities, villages, and inhabitants. But it must likewise be confessed, that in every age the want of harbours on the fea-coast, and the scarcity of fresh water in the inland provinces, have been very unfavourable to the commerce and agriculture of the Persians; who, in the calculation of their numbers, feem to have indulged one of the meanest, though most common, articles of national vanity. And the property of the solid true

As foon as the ambitious mind of Artaxerxes Recapituhad triumphed over the resistance of his vassals, lation of the warbehe began to threaten the neighbouring states, tween the who, during the long flumber of his predecessors, and Rohad infulted Persia with impunity. He obtained pire. fome easy victories over the wild Scythians and the effeminate Indians; but the Romans were an enemy, who, by their past injuries and present power, deserved the utmost efforts of his arms. A forty years tranquillity the fruit of valour and

enriched by the refort of the Arabian merchants. (See Geographie Nubiens, p. 58, and d'Anville Geographie Ancienne, tom. ii. p. 283.) In the last age the whole country was divided between three princes, one Mahometan and two Idolaters, who maintained their independence against the successors of Shaw Abbas. (Voyages de Tavernier, part i. l. v. p. 635.)

36 Chardin, tom. iii. c. 1, 2, 3.

mode-

CHAP.

P. moderation, had succeeded the victories of Trajan, During the period that elapsed from the accession of Marcus to the reign of Alexander, the Roman and the Parthian empires were twice engaged in war; and although the whole strength of the Arsacides contended with a part only of the forces of Rome, the event was most commonly in favour of the latter. Macrinus, indeed, prompted by his precarious fituation, and pufillanimous temper, purchased a peace at the expence of near two millions of our money 37; but the generals of Marcus, the emperor Severus, and his fon, erected many trophies in Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. Among their exploits, the imperfect relation of which would have unfeasonably interrupted the more important feries of domestic revolutions, we shall only mention the repeated calamities of the two great cities of Seleucia and Cteliphon.

Cities of Seleucia and Ctefiphon.

Perapire-

Seleucia, on the western bank of the Tigris, about forty-sive miles to the north of ancient Babylon, was the capital of the Macedonian conquests in Upper Asia 38. Many ages after the sall of their empire, Seleucia retained the genuine characters of a Grecian colony, arts, military virtue, and the love of freedom. The independent republic was governed by a senate of three hundred nobles; the people consisted of

-sbem

³⁷ Dion, l. xxviii. p. 1335.

³⁸ For the precise situation of Babylon, Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Modain, and Bagdad, cities often confounded with each other; see an excellent Geographical Tract of M. d'Anville, in Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xxx,

fix hundred thousand citizens; the walls were CHAP. ftrong, and as long as concord prevailed among the several orders of the state, they viewed with contempt the power of the Parthian: but the madness of faction was sometimes provoked to implore the dangerous aid of the common enemy, who was posted almost at the gates of the colony 39. The Parthian monarchs, like the Mogul fovereigns of Hindostan, delighted in the pastoral life of their Scythian ancestors; and the Imperial camp was frequently pitched in the plain of Ctefiphon, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, at the diffance of only three miles from Seleucia 40. The innumerable attendants on luxury and despotism resorted to the court, and the little village of Cteliphon infensibly swelled into a great city . Under the reign of Marcus, the Roman generals penetrated as far as Ctefiphon and Seleucia. They were received as friends A.D. 165. by the Greek colony; they attacked as enemies the feat of the Parthian kings; yet both cities experienced the fame treatment. The fack and conflagration of Seleucia, with the maffacre of three hundred thousand of the inhabitants, tar-

³⁹ Tacit. Annal. xi. 42. Plin. Hift. Nat. vi. 26.

⁴º This may be inferred from Strabo, 1. xvi. p. 743.

⁴¹ That most curious traveller Bernier, who followed the camp of Aurengzebe from Dehli to Cashmir, describes with great accuracy the immense moving city. The guard of cavalry consisted of 35,000 men, that of infantry of 10,000. It was computed that the camp contained 150,000 horses, mules, and elephants; 50,000 camels, 50,000 oxen, and between 300,000 and 400,000 persons. Almost all Dehli followed the court, whose magnificence supported its industry.

CHAP, nished the glory of the Roman triumph 42. Seleucia, already exhausted by the neighbourhood of a too powerful rival, funk under the fatal A.D. 198. blow; but Ctefiphon, in about thirty-three years. had fufficiently recovered its strength to maintain an obstinate siege against the emperor Severus. The city was, however, taken by affault: the king, who defended it in person, escaped with precipitation; an hundred thousand captives, and a rich booty, rewarded the fatigues of the Roman foldiers 43. Notwithstanding these misfortunes, Cteliphon succeeded to Babylon and to Seleucia, as one of the great capitals of the East. In summer, the monarch of Persia enjoyed at Ecbatana the cool breezes of the mountains of Media; but the mildness of the climate engaged him to prefer Cteliphon for his winter-relidence.

of Ofrhoene by the Romans.

,bedia

From these successful inroads, the Romans derived no real or lasting benefit; nor did they attempt to preferve such distant conquests, separated from the provinces of the empire by a large tract of intermediate desert. The reduction of the kingdom of Ofrhoene, was an acquifition of less splendour indeed, but of a far more solid advantage. That little state occupied the northern and most fertile part of Mesopotamia, between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Edeffa,

⁴² Dion, I. lxxi. p. 1178. Hift. August. p. 38. Eutrop. viii. 10. Euseb. in Chronic. Quadratus (quoted in the Augustan Hiftory) attempted to vindicate the Romans, by alleging, that the citizens of Seleucia had first violated their faith.

⁴³ Dion, l. lxxv. p. 1263. Herodian, l. iii. p. 120. Hift. Auguft. p. 70.

its capital, was fituated about twenty miles be- CHAP. yond the former of those rivers; and the inhabitants, fince the time of Alexander, were a mixed race of Greeks, Arabs, Syrians, and Armenians 44. The feeble fovereigns of Ofrhoene, placed on the dangerous verge of two contending empires, were attached from inclination to the Parthian cause; but the superior power of Rome exacted from them a reluctant homage, which is still attested by their medals. After the conclusion of the Parthian war under Marcus, it was judged prudent to secure some substantial pledges of their doubtful fidelity. Forts were constructed in several parts of the country, and a Roman garrison was fixed in the strong town of Nisibis. During the troubles that followed the death of Commodus, the princes of Ofrhoene attempted to shake off the yoke: but the stern policy of Severus confirmed their dependance 45, and the perfidy of Caracalla completed the easy conquest. Abgarus, the last king of Edessa, was sent in A.D. 216. chains to Rome, his dominions reduced into a province, and his capital dignified with the rank of colony; and thus the Romans, about ten years before the fall of the Parthian monarchy, ob-

He

⁴⁴ The polished citizens of Antioch, called those of Edessa mixed barbarians. It was, however, some praise, that of the three dialects of the Syriac, the purest and most elegant (the Aramæan) was spoke at Edessa. This remark M. Bayer (Hist. Edess. p. 5.) has borrowed from George of Malatia, a Syrian writer.

⁴⁵ Dion, l. lxxv. p. 1248, 1249, 1250. M. Bayer has neglected to use this most important passage.

CHAP. tained a firm and permanent establishment beyond the Euphrates " ravir blodt lo remod and bnoy

xes claims the provinces of Afia, and declares waragainst the Romans. A.D. 230.

-x Prudence as well as glory might have justified a war on the fide of Artaxerxes, had his views been confined to the defence or the acquifition of a useful frontier. But the ambitious Persian openly avowed a far more extensive delign of conquest; and he thought himself able to support his lofty pretentions by the arms of reason as well as by those of power. Cyrus, he alleged, had first subdued, and his successors had for a long time possessed, the whole extent of Asia, as far as the Propontis and the Ægæan Sea; the provinces of Caria and Ionia, under their empire, had been governed by Persian fatraps, and all Egypt, to the confines of Æthiopia, had acknowledged their fovereignty 47. Their rights had been suspended, but not destroyed, by a long usurpation; and as foon as he received the Perfran diadem, which birth and fuccessful valour had placed upon his head, the first great duty of his station called upon him to restore the ancient limits and fplendour of the monarchy. The Great King, therefore (fuch was the haughty flyle of his embaffies to the emperor Alexander), commanded the Romans instantly to depart from

46 This kingdom, from Osrhoes, who gave a new name to the country, to the last Abgarus, had lasted 353 years. See the learned work of M. Bayer, Historia Ofrhoena et Edessena.

Ł

0

d

a

b

a

a

tl tl

fc

de

W

Se

ot T

hu

CO

ph

ba

wi

wh

ha

bela

was

⁴⁷ Xenophon, in the preface to the Cyropædia, gives a clear and magnificent idea of the extent of the empire of Cyrus. Herodotus (1. iii. c. 79, &c.) enters into a curious and particular description of the twenty great Satrapies into which the Persian empire was divided by Darius Hystaspes.

all the provinces of his ancestors, and, yielding CHAP. to the Persians the empire of Asia, to content themselves with the undisturbed possession of Europe. This haughty mandate was delivered by four hundred of the tallest and most beautiful of the Persians; who, by their fine horses, splendid arms, and rich apparel, displayed the pride and greatness of their master 48. Such an embassy was much less an offer of negociation than a declaration of war. Both Alexander Severus and Artaxerxes, collecting the military force of the Roman and Persian monarchies, resolved in this important contest to lead their armies in perfon.

If we credit what should feem the most authen- Pretended tic of all records, an oration, still extant, and Alexander delivered by the emperor himself to the senate, Severus. A.D. 2334 we must allow that the victory of Alexander Severus was not inferior to any of those formerly obtained over the Persians by the son of Philip. The army of the Great King confifted of one hundred and twenty thousand horse, clothed in complete armour of steel; of seven hundred elephants, with towers filled with archers on their backs, and of eighteen hundred chariots, armed with scythes. This formidable hoft, the like of which is not to be found in eastern history, and has scarcely been imagined in eastern romance 49,

⁴⁸ Herodian, vi. 209. 212.

⁴⁹ There were two hundred feythed chariots at the battle of Arbela, in the host of Darius. In the vast army of Tigranes, which was vanquished by Lucullus, seventeen thousand horse only were VOL. I.

CHAP. was discomfitted in a great battle, in which the Roman Alexander approved himself an intrepid foldier and a skilful general. The Great King fled before his valour; an immense booty, and the conquest of Mesopotamia, were the immediate fruits of this fignal victory. Such are the circumstances of this oftentatious and improbable relation, dictated, as it too plainly appears, by the vanity of the monarch, adorned by the unblushing servility of his flatterers, and received without contradiction by a distant and obsequious senate 50. Far from being inclined to believe that the arms of Alexander obtained any memorable advantage over the Persians, we are induced to suspect, that all this blaze of imaginary glory was defigned to conceal some real disgrace. Later of Marchid point the second

> completely armed. Antiochus brought fifty-four elephants into the field against the Romans: by his frequent wars and negociations with the princes of India, he had once collected an hundred and fifty of those great animals; but it may be questioned, whether the most powerful monarch of Hindostan ever formed a line of battle of seven hundred elephants. Instead of three or four thousand elephants, which the Great Mogul was supposed to possess, Tavernier (Voyages, part ii. l. i. p. 198.) discovered, by a more accurate inquiry, that he had only five hundred for his baggage, and eighty or ninety for the service of war. The Greeks have varied with regard to the number which Porus brought into the field: but Quintus Curtius (viii. 13.), in this instance judicious and moderate, is contented with eighty-five elephants, distinguished by their fize and strength. In Siam, where these animals are the most numerous and the most esteemed, eighteen elephants are allowed as a fufficient proportion for each of the nine brigades into which a just army is divided. The whole number, of one hundred and fixty-two elephants of war, may fometimes be doubled. Hist. des Voyages, tom, ix. p. 260.

50 Hift. August. p. 133.

Our

de

Our fuspicions are confirmed by the authority CHAP. of a contemporary historian, who mentions the virtues of Alexander with respect, and his faults hable acwith candour. He describes the judicious plan count of which had been formed for the conduct of the war. Three Roman armies were destined to invade Persia at the same time, and by different roads. But the operations of the campaign, though wifely concerted, were not executed either with ability or success. The first of these armies, as foon as it had entered the marshy plains of Babylon, towards the artificial conflux of the Euphrates and the Tigris 51, was encompassed by the superior numbers, and destroyed by the arrows, of the enemy. The alliance of Chofroes king of Armenia 52, and the long tract of mountainous country, in which the Persian cavalry was of little service, opened a secure entrance into the heart of Media, to the fecond of the Roman armies. These brave troops laid waste the adjacent provinces, and by several successful actions against Artaxerxes, gave a faint colour to the emperor's vanity. But the retreat of this victorious army was imprudent, or at least unfortunate. In repassing the mountains, great numbers of foldiers perished by the badness of the roads, and

⁵¹ M. de Tillemont has already observed, that Herodian's geography is somewhat confused.

⁵² Moses of Chorene (Hist. Armen. l. ii. c. 71.) illustrates this invasion of Media, by afferting that Chosroes, king of Armenia, defeated Artaxerxes, and purfued him to the confines of India. The exploits of Chofrees have been magnified; and he acted as a dependent ally to the Romans.

CHAP. the severity of the winter season. It had been resolved, that whilst these two great detachments penetrated into the opposite extremes of the Perfian dominions, the main body, under the command of Alexander himself, should support their attack, by invading the centre of the kingdom. But the unexperienced youth, influenced by his mother's counfels, and perhaps by his own fears, deferted the bravest troops and the fairest prospect of victory; and after consuming in Mesopotamia an inactive and inglorious summer, he led back to Antioch an army diminished by sickness, and provoked by disappointment. The behaviour of Artaxerxes had been very different. Flying with rapidity from the hills of Media to the marshes of the Euphrates, he had every where opposed the invaders in person; and in either fortune, had united with the ablest conduct the most undaunted resolution. But in several obflinate engagements against the veteran legions of Rome, the Persian monarch had lost the flower of his troops. Even his victories had weakened his power. The favourable opportunities of the absence of Alexander, and of the confusions that followed that emperor's death, presented themfelves in vain to his ambition. Instead of expelling the Romans, as he pretended, from the continent of Asia, he found himself unable to wrest from their hands the little province of Mefopotamia 53.

60

"

"

ta

ai

a

de

fiz

lo

la

the

obf

of

tent

⁵³ For the account of this war, see Herodian, l. vi. p. 209. 212. The old abbreviators and modern compilers have blindly followed the Augustan History. The

The reign of Artaxerxes, which from the last CHAP. defeat of the Parthians lasted only sourteen years, forms a memorable æra in the history of the East, Character and maxand even in that of Rome. His character feems ims of Arto have been marked by those bold and com- A.D. 240. manding features, that generally diffinguish the princes who conquer, from those who inherit, an empire. Till the last period of the Persian monarchy, his code of laws was respected as the ground-work of their civil and religious policy 54. Several of his fayings are preferved. One of them in particular discovers a deep insight into the constitution of government. "The autho-" rity of the prince," faid Artaxerxes, " must " be defended by a military force; that force " can only be maintained by taxes; all taxes " must, at last, fall upon agriculture; and agri-" culture can never flourish except under the " protection of justice and moderation "." Artaxerxes bequeathed his new empire, and his ambitious designs against the Romans, to Sapor, a fon not unworthy of his great father; but those defigns were too extensive for the power of Perfia, and ferved only to involve both nations in a long feries of destructive wars and reciprocal calamities.

54 Eutychius, tom. ii. p. 180. verf. Pocock. The great Chofroes Noushirwan sent the Code of Artaxerxes to all his Satraps, as the invariable rule of their conduct.

55 D'Herbelot Bibliotheque Orientale, au mot Ardsbir. We may observe, that after an ancient period of fables, and a long interval of darkness, the modern histories of Persia begin to assume an air of toth with the dynasty of the Sassanides.

The

Military power of the Perfians.

The Persians, long fince civilized and corrupted, were very far from possessing the martial independence, and the intrepid hardiness, both of mind and body, which have rendered the northern barbarians malters of the world. The fcience of war, that constituted the more rational force of Greece and Rome, as it now does of Europe, never made any confiderable progress in the East. Those disciplined evolutions which harmonize and animate a confused multitude, were unknown to the Persians. They were equally unskilled in the arts of constructing, belieging, or defending regular fortifications. They trusted more to their numbers than to their courage; more to their courage than to their difcipline. The infantry was a half-armed spiritless crowd of peasants, levied in haste by the allurements of plunder, and as eafily dispersed by a victory as by a defeat. The monarch and his nobles transported into the camp the pride and luxury of the feraglio. Their military operations were impeded by a useless train of women, cunuchs, horses, and camels, and in the midst of a fuccessful campaign, the Persian host was often feparated or destroyed by an unexpected famine 56.

Their infantry contemptible.

Their cavalry excellent.

But the nobles of Persia, in the bosom of luxury and despotism, preserved a strong sense of personal gallantry and national honour. From

⁵⁶ Herodian, l. vi. p. 214. Ammianus Marcellinus, l. xxiii. c. 6. Some differences may be observed between the two historians, the natural effects of the changes produced by a century and a half.

the age of seven years they were taught to speak CHAP. truth, to shoot with the bow, and to ride; and it was univerfally confessed, that in the two last of these arts, they had made a more than common proficiency 57. The most distinguished youth were educated under the monarch's eye, practifed their exercises in the gate of his palace, and were feverely trained up to the habits of temperance and obedience, in their long and laborious parties of hunting. In every province, the satrap maintained a like school of military virtue. The Persian nobles (so natural is the idea of feudal tenures) received from the king's bounty lands and houses, on the condition of their service in They were ready on the first summons to mount on horseback, with a martial and splendid train of followers, and to join the numerous bodies of guards, who were carefully felected from amongst the most robust slaves, and the bravest adventurers of Asia. These armies, both of light and of heavy cavalry, equally formidable by the impetuolity of their charge, and the rapidity of their motions, threatened, as an impending cloud, the eastern provinces of the declining empire of Rome 58 minister out the middle the little m

57 The Persians are still the most skilful horsemen, and their horses the finest, in the East.

⁵⁸ From Herodotus, Xenophon, Herodian, Ammianus, Chardin, &c. I have extracted fuch probable accounts of the Persian nobility, as seem either common to every age, or particular to that of the Sassanides,

the age of fever years they were taught to fouck

right, to thoot with the boys, and to ride; and it

The State of Germany till the Invasion of the Barbarians, in the Time of the Emperor Decius.

THE government and religion of Persia have deserved some notice from their connexion with the decline and fall of the Roman empire. We shall occasionally mention the Scythian, or Sarmatian tribes, which, with their arms and horses, their flocks and herds, their wives and families, wandered over the immense plains which fpread themselves from the Caspian Sea to the Vistula, from the confines of Persia to those of Germany. But the warlike Germans, who first refifted, then invaded, and at length overturned, the western monarchy of Rome, will occupy a much more important place in this history, and possess a stronger, and, if we may use the expresfion, a more domestic, claim to our attention and regard. The most civilized nations of modern Europe issued from the woods of Germany, and in the rude institutions of those barbarians we may still distinguish the original principles of our present laws and manners. In their primitive state of simplicity and independence, the Germans were furveyed by the difcerning eye, and delineated by the masterly pencil, of Tacitus, the first of historians who applied the science of philosophy to the study of facts. The expressive conciseness of his descriptions has deserved to exercife

ercise the diligence of innumerable antiquarians, CHAP. and to excite the genius and penetration of the philosophic historians of our own times. The subject, however various and important, has already been fo frequently, fo ably, and fo fuccefsfully discussed, that it is now grown familiar to the reader, and difficult to the writer. We shall therefore content ourselves with observing, and indeed with repeating, fome of the most important circumstances of climate, of manners, and of institutions, which rendered the wild barbarians of Germany fuch formidable enemies to the Roman power.

Ancient Germany, excluding from its inde- Extent of pendent limits the province westward of the Germany. Rhine, which had submitted to the Roman yoke, extended itself over a third part of Europe. most the whole of modern Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Livonia, Prussia, and the greater part of Poland, were peopled by the various tribes of one great nation, whose complexion, manners, and language denoted a common origin, and preferved a striking resemblance. On the west, ancient Germany was divided by the Rhine from the Gallic, and on the fouth, by the Danube, from the Illyrian provinces of the empire. A ridge of hills, riling from the Danube, and called the Carpathian Mountains, covered Germany on the fide of Dacia or Hungary. The eastern frontier was faintly marked by the mutual fears of the Germans and the Sarmatians. and was often confounded by the mixture of warring and confederating tribes of the two nations.

CHAP. In the remote darkness of the north, the ancients imperfectly descried a frozen ocean that lay beyond the Baltic Sea, and beyond the Peninfula, or islands of Scandinavia.

Climate.

Some ingenious writers 2 have suspected that Europe was much colder formerly than it is at present; and the most ancient descriptions of the climate of Germany tend exceedingly to confirm their theory. The general complaints of intense frost, and eternal winter, are perhaps little to be regarded, fince we have no method of reducing to the accurate standard of the thermometer, the feelings, or the expressions of an orator, born in the happier regions of Greece or Asia. But I shall select two remarkable circumstances of a less equivocal nature. 1. The great rivers which covered the Roman provinces, the Rhine and the Danube, were frequently frozen over, and capable of supporting the most enormous weights. The barbarians, who often chose that severe seafon for their inroads, transported, without apprehension or danger, their numerous armies, their

The modern philosophers of Sweden seem agreed that the waters of the Baltic gradually fink in a regular proportion, which they have ventured to estimate at half an inch every year. Twenty centuries ago, the flat country of Scandinavia must have been covered by the fea; while the high lands rose above the waters, as so many islands of various forms and dimensions. Such indeed is the notion given us by Mela, Pliny, and Tacitus, of the vast countries round the Baltic. See in the Bibliotheque Raisonnée, tom. xl. and xlv. a large abstract of Dalin's History of Sweden, composed in the Swedish lan-

² In particular, Mr. Hume, the Abbé du Bos, and M. Pelloutier, Hift. des Celtes, tom, i.

cavalry, and their heavy waggons, over a vaft CHAP. and folid bridge of ice 3. Modern ages have not presented an instance of a like phænomenon. 2. The rein deer, that useful animal, from whom the favage of the North derives the best comforts of his dreary life, is of a constitution that supports, and even requires, the most intense cold. He is found on the rock of Spitzberg, within ten degrees of the Pole; he feems to delight in the snows of Lapland and Siberia; but at present he cannot fubfift, much less multiply, in any country to the south of the Baltic . In the time of Cæsar, the rein deer, as well as the elk, and the wild bull, was a native of the Hercynian forest, which then overshadowed a great part of Germany and Poland 5. The modern improvements sufficiently explain the causes of the diminution of the cold. These immense woods have been gradually cleared, which intercepted from the earth the rays of the fun . The morasses have been drained, and, in proportion as the foil has been cultivated, the air has become more temperate. Canada, at this

³ Diodorus Siculus, 1. v. p. 340. Edit. Wessel. Herodian, l. vi. p. 221. Jornandes, c. 55. On the banks of the Danube, the wine, when brought to table, was frequently frozen into great lumps, frusa vini. Ovid. Epist. ex Ponto, l. iv. 7, 9, 10. Virgil. Georgic. l. iii. 355, The fact is confirmed by a soldier and a philosopher, who had experienced the intense cold of Thrace. See Xepophon, Anabasis, l. vii. p. 560. Edit. Hutchinson.

⁴ Buffon Histoire Naturelle, tom. xii. p. 79. 116.

⁵ Cæsar de Bell. Gallic. vi. 23, &c. The most inquisitive of the Germans were ignorant of its utmost limits, although some of them had travelled in it more than sixty days journey.

⁶ Cluverius (Germania Antiqua, 1. iii. c. 47.) investigates the small and scattered remains of the Hercynian wood.

CHAP.

day, is an exact picture of ancient Germany. Although fituated in the same parallel with the finest provinces of France and England, that country experiences the most rigorous cold. The rein deer are very numerous, the ground is covered with deep and lasting snow, and the great river of St Lawrence is regularly frozen, in a sea-son when the waters of the Seine and the Thames are usually free from ice?

Its effects on the natives.

It is difficult to afcertain, and eafy to exaggerate, the influence of the climate of ancient Germany over the minds and bodies of the natives. Many writers have supposed, and most have allowed, though, as it should seem, without any adequate proof, that the rigorous cold of the North was favourable to long life and generative vigour, that the women were more fruitful, and the human species more prolific, than in warmer or more temperate climates. We may affert, with greater confidence, that the keen air of Germany formed the large and masculine limbs of the natives, who were, in general, of a more lofty stature than the people of the South , gave them a kind of strength better adapted to violent exertions than to patient labour, and impired them with constitutional bravery, which is the result of nerves and spirits. The severity of a winter cam-

⁷ Charlevoix Histoire du Canada.

³ Olaus Rudbeck afferts that the Swedish women often bear ten or twelve children, and not uncommonly twenty or thirty; but the authority of Rudbeck is much to be suspected.

⁹ In hos artus, in hæc corpora, quæ miramur, excrescunt. Tacit. Germania, 3. 20. Cluver. l. i. c. 14.

paign, that chilled the courage of the Roman troops, was scarcely felt by these hardy children of the North ", who, in their turn, were unable to refift the fummer heats, and diffolved away in languor and fickness under the beams of an Italian fun ".

CHAP.

There is not any where upon the globe, a large Origin of tract of country, which we have discovered desti- mans. tute of inhabitants, or whose first population can be fixed with any degree of historical certainty. And yet, as the most philosophic minds can feldom refrain from investigating the infancy of great nations, our curiofity confumes itself in toilfome and disappointed efforts. When Tacitus considered the purity of the German blood, and the forbidding aspect of the country, he was difposed to pronounce those barbarians Indigena, or natives of the foil. We may allow with fafety, and perhaps with truth, that ancient Germany was not originally peopled by any foreign colonies, already formed into a political fociety 12;

but that the name and nation received their existence from the gradual union of some wandering

¹⁰ Plutarch. in Mario. The Cimbri, by way of amusement, often slid down mountains of snow on their broad shields.

II The Romans made war in all climates, and by their excellent discipline were in a great measure preserved in health and vigour. It may be remarked, that man is the only animal which can live and multiply in every country from the equator to the poles. The hog feems to approach the nearest to our species in that privilege.

¹² Tacit. German. c. 3. The emigration of the Gauls followed the course of the Danube, and discharged itself on Greece and Afia-Tacitus could difcover only one inconsiderable tribe that retained any traces of a Gallic origin.

THE DECLINE AND FALL

Con

CHAP. favages of the Hercynian woods. To affert those favages to have been the spontaneous production of the earth which they inhabited, would be a rash inference, condemned by religion, and unwarranted by reason.

Fables and conjectures.

Such rational doubt is but ill-fuited with the genius of popular vanity. Among the nations who have adopted the Mosaic history of the world, the ark of Noah has been of the same use, as was formerly to the Greeks and Romans the fiege of Troy. On a narrow basis of acknowledged truth, an immense but rude superstructure of fable has been erected; and the wild Irishman 13, as well as the wild Tartar 14, could point out the individual fon of Japhet, from whose loins his ancestors were lineally descended. The last century abounded with antiquarians of profound learning and easy faith, who, by the dim light of legends and traditions, of conjectures and etymologies, conducted the great grandchildren of Noah from the Tower of Babel to the extremities of the globe. Of these judicious critics, one of the most enter-

¹³ According to Dr. Keating (History of Ireland, p. 13, 14.), the giant Partholanus, who was the fon of Seara, the fon of Esra, the son of Sru, the son of Framant, the son of Fathaclan, the son of Magog, the son of Japhet, the son of Noah, landed on the coast of Munster, the 14th day of May, in the year of the world one thoufand nine hundred and feventy-eight. Though he succeeded in his great enterprise, the loose behaviour of his wife rendered his domeltic life very unhappy, and provoked him to fuch a degree, that he killed-her favourite greyhound. This, as the learned historian very properly observes, was the first instance of female falsehood and infidelity ever known in Ireland.

¹⁴ Genealogical History of the Tartars by Abulghazi Bahadur Khan.

faining was Olaus Rudbeck, professor in the uni- CHAP. verfity of Upfal". Whatever is celebrated either in history or fable, this zealous patriot ascribes to his country. From Sweden (which formed fo confiderable a part of ancient Germany) the Greeks themselves derived their alphabetical characters, their aftronomy, and their religion. Of that delightful region (for fuch it appeared to the eves of a native) the Atlantis of Plato, the country of the Hyperboreans, the gardens of the Hefperides, the Fortunate Islands, and even the Elysian Fields, were all but faint and imperfect tranfcripts. A clime so profusely favoured by Nature, could not long remain defert after the flood. The learned Rudbeck allows the family of Noah a few years to multiply from eight to about twenty thousand persons. He then disperses them into small colonies to replenish the earth, and to propagate the human species. The German or Swedish detachment (which marched, if I am not mistaken, under the command of Askenaz the son of Gomer, the fon of Japhet) distinguished itself by a more than common diligence in the profecution of this great work. The northern hive cast its swarms over the greatest part of Europe, Africa, and Asia; and (to use the author's metaphor) the blood circulated from the extremities to the heart.

But all this well-laboured fystem of German The Gerantiquities is annihilated by a fingle fact, too well mans ignorant of

letters;

attested

¹⁵ His work, entitled Atlantica, is uncommonly scarce. Bayle has given two most curious extracts from it. Republique des Lettres Janvier et Fevrier, 1685.

CHAP. attefted to admit of any doubt, and of too decio five a nature to leave room for any reply. The Germans, in the age of Tacitus, were unacquainted with the use of letters "; and the use of letters is the principal circumstance that distinguishes a civilized people from a herd of savages incapable of knowledge or reflection. Without that artificial help, the human memory foon diffipates or corrupts the ideas intrusted to her charge; and the nobler faculties of the mind, no longer fupplied with models or with materials, gradually forget their powers; the judgment becomes feeble and lethargic, the imagination languid or irregular. Fully to apprehend this important truth, let us attempt, in an improved fociety, to calculate the immense distance between the man of learning and the illiterate peafant. The former, by reading and reflection, multiplies his own experience, and lives in diftant ages and remote countries; whilft the latter, rooted to a fingle spot, and confined to a few years of existence, surpasses, but very little, his fellow-la-

16 Tacit. Germ. ii. 19. Literarum secreta viri pariter ac fœminæ ignorant. We may rest contented with this decisive authority, without entering into the obscure disputes concerning the antiquity of the Runic characters. The learned Celfius, a Swede, a scholar, and a philosopher, was of opinion, that they were nothing more than the Roman letters, with the curves changed into straight lines for the ease of engraving. See Pelloutier, Histoire des Celtes, 1. ii. Dictionnaire Diplomatique, tom. i. p. 223. We may add, that the oldest Runic inscriptions are supposed to be of the third century, and the most ancient writer who mentions the Runic characters, is Venantius Fortunatus (Carm. vii. 18.), who lived towards the end of the fixth century.

Barbara frazineis pingatur RUNA tabellis.

M

bouter the ox in the exercise of his mental fa- C HAP. culties. The fame, and even a greater, difference will be found between nations than between individuals; and we may fafely pronounce, that without fome species of writing, no people has ever preserved the faithful annals of their history, ever made any confiderable progress in the abstract sciences, or ever possessed, in any tolerable degree of perfection, the useful and agreeable arts of life new leads the tion tibes, were sold

edly destitute. They passed their lives in a state ture; of ignorance and poverty, which it has pleafed fome declaimers to dignify with the appellation of virtuous simplicity. Modern Germany is said to contain about two thousand three hundred walled towns 17. In a much wider extent of country, the geographer Ptolemy could discover no more than ninety places, which he decorates with the name of cities 18; though, according to our ideas, they would but ill deserve that splendid title. We can only suppose them to have been

rude fortifications, constructed in the centre of the woods, and defigned to fecure the women, children, and cattle, whilft the warriors of the tribe marched out to repel a fudden invalion 19.

Of these arts, the ancient Germans were wretch- of arts and

¹⁷ Recherches Philosophiques sur les Americains, tom. iii. p. 228. The author of that very curious work is, if I am not misinformed, a German by birth.

¹⁸ The Alexandrian Geographer is often criticised by the accurate Cluverius.

¹⁹ See Cæsar, and the learned Mr. Whitaker in his History of Manchester, vol. i.

- בערו לעוב

CHAPO But Tacitus afferts, as a well-known fact, that the Germans, in his time, had no cities 20 and that they affected to despise the works of Roman industry, as places of confinement rather than of fecurity 21. Their edifices were not even contiguous, or formed into regular villas 22; each barbarian fixed his independent dwelling on the fpot to which a plain, a wood, or a stream of fresh water, had induced him to give the preference. Neither stone, nor brick, nor tiles, were employed in these slight habitations 23. They were for atta lo indeed no more than low huts of a circular figure, built of rough timber, thatched with straw, and pierced at the top to leave a free passage for the fmoke. In the most inclement winter, the hardy German was fatisfied with a fcanty garment made of the skin of some animal. The nations who dwelt towards the North, clothed themselves in furs; and the women manufactured for their own use a coarse kind of linen 24. The game of various forts, with which the forests of Germany were plentifully stocked, supplied its inhabitants

pillor

Mancheller, vol. 7

²⁰ Tacit. Germ. 15.

²¹ When the Germans commanded the Ubii of Cologne to cast off the Roman yoke, and with their new freedom to resume their ancient manners, they insisted on the immediate demolition of the walls of the colony. "Postulamus a vobis, muros coloniæ, mu-" nimenta servitii detrahatis; etiam fera animalia, si clausa teneas, virtutis obliviscuntur." Tacit. Hift. iv. 64.

²² The straggling villages of Silesia are several miles in length. See Cluver. l. i. c. 13.

²³ One hundred and forty years after Tacitus, a few more regular structures were erected near the Rhine and Danube. Herodian, f. vii. p. 234. att 177 tal bennat &d fine and 20 see

²⁴ Tacit. Germ. 17.

with food and exercise 25. Their monstrous herds CHAP. of cattle, less remarkable indeed for their beauty than for their utility 26, formed the principal object of their wealth. A fmall quantity of corn was the only produce exacted from the earth: the use of orchards or artificial meadows was unknown to the Germans; nor can we expect any improvements in agriculture from a people, whose property every year experienced a general change by a new division of the arable lands, and who, in that strange operation, avoided disputes, by fuffering a great part of their territory to lie waste and without tillage 27.

Gold, filver, and iron, were extremely scarce and of the in Germany. Its barbarous inhabitants wanted use of meboth skill and patience to investigate those rich veins of filver, which have fo liberally rewarded the attention of the princes of Brunswick and Saxony. Sweden, which now supplies Europe with iron, was equally ignorant of its own riches; and the appearance of the arms of the Germans furnished a sufficient proof how little iron they were able to bestow on what they must have deemed the noblest use of that metal. The various transactions of peace and war had introduced some Roman coins (chiefly filver) among the borderers of the Rhine and Danube; but the more distant tribes were absolutely unacquainted with the use of money, carried on their confined traffic by the exchange of commodities, and

²⁶ Cæfar de Bell. Gall. vi. 21. 25 Tacit, Germ. 5.

²⁷ Tacit. Germ, 26. Cæfar, vi. 22.

CHAP, prized their rude earthen vessels as of equal value with the filver vales, the presents of Rome to their princes and ambaffadors 28. To a mind capable of reflection, such leading facts convey more instruction, than a tedious detail of subordinate circumstances. The value of money has been fettled by general confent to express our wants and our property; as letters were invented to express our ideas; and both these institutions, by giving a more active energy to the powers and passions of human nature, have contributed to multiply the objects they were designed to represent. The use of gold and silver is in a great measure factitious; but it would be impossible to enumerate the important and various services which agriculture, and all the arts, have received from iron, when tempered and fashioned by the operation of fire, and the dexterous hand of man. Money, in a word, is the most universal incitement, iron the most powerful instrument, of human industry; and it is very difficult to conceive by what means a people, neither actuated by the one, nor feconded by the other, could emerge from the groffest barbarism 29.

Their indolence.

If we contemplate a favage nation in any part of the globe, a supine indolence and a carelessness of futurity will be found to conflitute their general character. In a civilized state, every faculty

prized

²⁸ Tacit. Germ. 6.

²⁹ It is faid that the Mexicans and Peruvians, without the use of either money or iron, had made a very great progress in the arts. Those arts, and the monuments they produced, have been strangely magnified. See Recherches fur les Americains, tom. ii. p. 153, &c.

of man is expanded and exercised; and the great CHAP. chain of mutual dependence connects and embraces the feveral members of fociety. The most numerous portion of it is employed in constant and useful labour. The select few, placed by fortune above that necessity, can, however, fill up their time by the pursuits of interest or glory, by the improvement of their estate or of their understanding, by the duties, the pleasures, and even the follies of focial life. The Germans were not possessed of these varied resources. The care of the house and family, the management of the land and cattle, were delegated to the old and the infirm, to women and flaves. The lazy warrior, destitute of every art that might employ his leifure hours, confumed his days and nights in the animal gratifications of fleep and food. And yet, by a wonderful diversity of Nature (according to the remark of a writer who had pierced into its darkest recesses), the same barbarians are by turns the most indolent and the most restless of mankind. They delight in floth, they deteft tranquillity 30. The languid foul, oppreffed with its own weight, anxiously required some new and powerful sensation; and war and danger were the only amusements adequate to its fierce temper. The found that fummoned the German to arms was grateful to his ear. It roused him from his uncomfortable lethargy, gave him an active purfuit, and, by strong exercise of the body, and violent emotions of the mind, restored him to a

30 Tacit. Germ. 15.

CHAP. more lively sense of his existence. In the dull intervals of peace, these barbarians were immoderately addicted to deep gaming and excessive drinking; both of which, by different means, the one by inflaming their passions, the other by extinguishing their reason, alike relieved them from the pain of thinking. They gloried in paffing whole days and nights at table; and the blood of friends and relations often stained their numerous and drunken affemblies 31. Their debts of honour (for in that light they have transmitted to us those of play) they discharged with the most romantic fidelity. The desperate gamester, who had staked his person and liberty on a last throw of the dice, patiently submitted to the decision of fortune, and fuffered himself to be bound, chastifed, and fold into remote flavery, by his weaker but more lucky antagonist 35.

Their tafte for ftrong liquors.

Strong beer, a liquor extracted with very little art from wheat or barley, and corrupted (as it is strongly expressed by Tacitus) into a certain semblance of wine, was fufficient for the gross purposes of German debauchery. But those who had tasted the rich wines of Italy, and afterwards of Gaul, fighed for that more delicious species of intoxication. They attempted not, however (as has fince been executed with fo much fuccess), to naturalize the vine on the banks of the Rhine and Danube; nor did they endeavour to procure

anom:

³¹ Tacit. Germ. 22, 23.

³² Id. 24. The Germans might borrow the arts of play from the Romans, but the passion is wonderfully inherent in the human fpecies.

by industry the materials of an advantageous CHAP. commerce. To folicit by labour what might be ravished by arms, was esteemed unworthy of the German spirit 33. The intemperate thirst of strong liquors often urged the barbarians to invade the provinces on which art or nature had bestowed those much envied presents. The Tuscan who betraved his country to the Celtic nations, attracted them into Italy by the prospect of the rich fruits and delicious wines, the productions of a happier climate 34. And in the same manner the German auxiliaries, invited into France during the civil wars of the fixteenth century, were allured by the promise of plenteous quarters in the the provinces of Champaigne and Burgundy 35. Drunkenness, the most illiberal, but not the most dangerous of our vices, was fometimes capable, in a less civilized state of mankind, of occasioning a battle, a war, or a revolution.

The climate of ancient Germany has been mol- State of lified, and the foil fertilized, by the labour of populaten centuries from the time of Charlemagne. The same extent of ground which at present maintains, in ease and plenty, a million of husbandmen and artificers, was unable to fupply an hundred thousand lazy warriors with the simple neceffaries of life. The Germans abandoned their

immense

³³ Tacit. Germ. 14.

³⁴ Plutarch. in Camillo. T. Liv. v. 33.

³⁵ Dubos. Hist. de la Monarchie Françoise, tom. i. p. 193.

³⁶ The Helvetian nation, which issued from the country called Switzerland, contained, of every age and fex, 368,000 persons Aa 4

CHAP immense forests to the exercise of hunting, employed in pasturage the most considerable part of their lands, bestowed on the small remainder a rude and careless cultivation, and then accused the scantiness and sterility of a country that refused to maintain the multitude of its inhabitants. When the return of famine feverely admonished them of the importance of the arts, the national diffress was fometimes alleviated by the emigration of a third, perhaps, or a fourth part of their youth 37. The possession and the enjoyment of property are the pledges which bind a civilized people to an improved country. But the Germans, who carried with them what they most valued, their arms, their cattle, and their women, cheerfully abandoned the vast silence of their woods for the unbounded hopes of plunder and conquest. The innumerable swarms that issued, or feemed to iffue, from the great storehouse of nations, were multiplied by the fears of the vanquished, and by the credulity of succeeding ages. And from facts thus exaggerated, an opinion was gradually established, and has been supported by writers of diftinguished reputation, that, in the age of Cæsar and Tacitus, the inhabitants of the North were far more numerous than they are in

> (Cæfar de Bell, Gall. i. 29.). At present, the number of people in the Pays de Vaud (a small district on the banks of the Leman Lake, much more distinguished for politeness than for industry) amounts to 112,591. See an excellent Tract of M. Muret, in the Memoires de la Societé de Bern.

> 37 Paul Diaconus, c. 1, 2, 3. Machiavel, Davila, and the reft of Paul's followers, represent these emigrations too much as regular and concerted measures. to P. Milana

our days 38. A more ferious inquiry into the CHAP. causes of population, seems to have convinced modern philosophers of the falsehood, and indeed the impossibility, of the supposition. To the names of Mariana and of Machiavel 39, we can oppose the equal names of Robertson and Hume the read bluos said bassupersons stads vo

A warlike nation like the Germans, without German either cities, letters, arts, or money, found fome freedom, compensation for this savage state in the enjoyment of liberty. Their poverty secured their freedom, fince our defires and our possessions are the strongest fetters of despotism. "Among " the Suiones (fays Tacitus), riches are held in " honour. They are therefore subject to an ab-" folute monarch, who, instead of intrusting his " people with the free use of arms, as is practifed " in the rest of Germany, commits them to the " fafe custody not of a citizen, or even of a " freedman, but of a flave. The neighbours of " the Suiones, the Sitones, are funk even below " fervitude; they obey a woman "." In the mention of these exceptions, the great historian fufficiently acknowledges the general theory of government. We are only at a loss to conceive

³⁸ Sir William Temple and Montesquieu have indulged, on this subject, the usual liveliness of their fancy.

³⁹ Machiavel Hift. di Firenze, l. i. Mariana Hift. Hispan. l. v.

⁴⁰ Robertson's Cha. V. Hume's Political Essays.

⁴¹ Tacit. German. 44, 45. Frenshemius (who dedicated his supplement to Livy, to Christina of Sweden) thinks proper to be very angry with the Roman who expressed so very little reverence for Northern queens,

CHAP by what means riches and despotisin could penetrate into a remote corner of the North, and extinguish the generous flame that blazed with fuch fierceness on the frontier of the Roman provinces: or how the ancestors of those Danes and Norwegians, fo diftinguished in latter ages by their unconquered spirit, could thus tamely refign the great character of German liberty 42. Some tribes, however, on the coast of the Baltic, acknowledged the authority of kings, though without relinquishing the rights of men 43; but in the far greater part of Germany, the form of government was a democracy, tempered indeed, and controlled, not fo much by general and positive laws, as by the occasional ascendant of birth or valour, of eloquence or fuperstition 4.

of the people.

Affemblies Civil governments, in their first institutions, are voluntary affociations for mutual defence. To obtain the defired end, it is absolutely necessary, that each individual should conceive himself obliged to fubmit his private opinion and actions, to the judgment of the greater number of his affociates. The German tribes were contented with this rude but liberal outline of political fociety. As foon as a youth, born of free parents, had attained the age of manhood, he was

⁴² May we not suspect that superstition was the parent of despotism? The descendants of Odin (whose race was not extinct till the year 1060) are faid to have reigned in Sweden above a thousand years. The temple of Upfal was the ancient feat of religion and empire. In the year 1153 I find a fingular law, prohibiting the use and profession of arms to any except the king's guards. Is it not probable that it was coloured by the pretence of reviving an old inftitution? See Dallin's History of Sweden in the Bibliothéque Raisonnée, tom,xl. and xl v.

⁴⁴ Id. c. 11, 12, 13, &c. 43 Tacit. Germ, c. 43.

introduced into the general council of his coun- CHAP. trymen, folemnly invested with a shield and spear, and adopted as an equal and worthy member of the military commonwealth. The affembly of the warriors of the tribe was convened at stated feafons, or on fudden emergencies. The trial of public offences, the election of magistrates, and the great buliness of peace and war, were determined by its independent voice. Sometimes, indeed, these important questions were previously considered, and prepared in a more felect council of the principal chieftains 45. The magistrates might deliberate and persuade, the people only could refolve and execute; and the resolutions of the Germans were for the most part hafty and violent. Barbarians accustomed to place their freedom in gratifying the prefent passion, and their courage in overlooking all future consequences, turned away with indignant contempt from the remonstrances of justice and policy, and it was the practice to fignify by a hollow murmur, their dislike of such timid counsels. But whenever a more popular orator proposed to vindicate the meanest citizen from either foreign or domestic injury, whenever he called upon his fellow-countrymen to affert the national honour, or to pursue some enterprise full of danger and glory, a loud clashing of shields and spears expressed the eager applause of the affembly. For the Germans always met

⁴⁵ Grotius changes an expression of Tacitus, pertrassantur into pratrassantur. The correction is equally just and ingenious.

CHAP. in arms, and it was constantly to be dreaded; left an irregular multitude, inflamed with faction and firong liquors, should use those arms to enforce, as well as to declare, their furious refolves. We may recollect how often the diets of Poland have been polluted with blood, and the more numerous party has been compelled to yield to the more violent and feditious 46.

Authority of the princesand magistrates

A general of the tribe was elected on occasions of danger; and, if the danger was preffing and extensive, several tribes concurred in the choice of the same general. The bravest warrior was named to lead his countrymen into the field, by his example rather than by his commands. But this power, however limited, was fill invidious. It expired with the war, and in time of peace the German tribes acknowledged not any fupreme chief 47. Princes were, however, appointed, in the general affembly, to administer justice, or rather to compose differences 48, in their respective districts. In the choice of these magistrates, as much regard was shewn to birth as to merit 49. To each was affigned, by the public, a guard, and a council of an hundred persons; and the first of the princes appears to have enjoyed a pre-eminence of rank and honour

Miles Mary

⁴⁶ Even in our ancient parliament, the barons often carried a queftion, not so much by the number of votes, as by that of their armed followers.

⁴⁷ Cæfar de Bell. Gall. vi. 23.

⁴⁸ Minuunt controversias, is a very happy expression of Cæsar's.

⁴⁹ Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute sumunt. Tacit. Germ. 7.

which fometimes tempted the Romans to com- CHAP. pliment him with the regal title so. a brown with

The comparative view of the powers of the more absomagistrates, in two remarkable instances, is alone the properfusficient to represent the whole system of Ger- ty than oman manners. The disposal of the landed pro- fons of the perty within their district, was absolutely vested Germans. in their hands, and they distributed it every year according to a new division 51. At the same time they were not authorized to punish with death, to imprison, or even to strike, a private citizen 52. A people thus jealous of their perfons, and careless of their possessions, must have been totally destitute of industry and the arts, but animated with a high fense of honour and independence. I A dead saw without oviour

The Germans respected only those duties which Voluntary they imposed on themselves. The most obscure engagements. foldier relisted with difdain the authority of the magistrates. "The noblest youths blushed not " to be numbered among the faithful compa-" nions of some renowned chief, to whom they " devoted their arms and fervice. A noble demulation prevailed among the companions to " obtain the first place in the esteem of their " chief; amongst the chiefs to acquire the great-" est number of valiant companions. " ever furrounded by a band of felect youths, " was the pride and strength of the chiefs, their ornament in peace, their defence in war. The

lute over

THOM! Y

⁵⁰ Cluver. Germ. Ant. 1. i. c. 38.

⁵¹ Cæfar, vi. 22. Tacit. Germ. 26.

⁵² Tacit. Germ. 7. ... 21 3 ... 3 ... 62

lute over

wer the per-

distribile.

-22100/13

vacing 19

CHAR. a glory of fuch diftinguished heroes diffused itself "beyond the narrow limits of their own tribe. Presents and embassies solicited their friendstate, and the fame of their arms often enfured victory to the party which they espoused. In the hour of danger it was shameful for the " chief to be surpassed in valour by his com-" panions; shameful for the companions not to " equal the valour of their chief. To survive " his fall in battle, was indelible infamy. To " protect his person, and to adorn his glory with the trophies of their own exploits, were the most facred of their duties. The chiefs combated for victory, the companions for the chief. The noblest warriors, whenever their " native country was funk, in the laziness of peace, maintained their numerous bands in " fome distant scene of action, to exercise their er restless spirit, and to acquire renown by vose luntary dangers. Gifts worthy of foldiers, the " warlike steed, the bloody and ever victorious " lance, were the rewards which the companions e claimed from the liberality of their chief. "The rude plenty of his hospitable board was " the only pay that be could bestow, or they " would accept. War, rapine, and the freewill offerings of his friends, supplied the materials of this munificence "." This institution, however it might accidentally weaken the feveral republics, invigorated the general character of the Germans, and even ripened amongst risp, yn es. Their Chim. 26.

them all the virtues of which barbarians are ful- CHAP. ceptible; the faith and valour, the hospitality and the courtefy, fo conspicuous long afterwards in the ages of chivalry. The honourable gifts, bestowed by the chief on his brave companions, have been supposed, by an ingenious writer, to contain the first rudiments of the fiefs, distributed, after the conquest of the Roman provinces, by the barbarian lords among their vaffals, with a fimilar duty of homage and military fervice 54. These conditions are, however, very repugnant to the maxims of the ancient Germans, who delighted in mutual prefents; but without either imposing, or accepting, the weight of obligations ". and season and to although the

"In the days of chivalry, or more properly of German " romance, all the men were brave, and all the " women were chafte;" and notwithstanding the latter of these virtues is acquired and preferved with much more difficulty than the former, it is ascribed, almost without exception, to the wives of the ancient Germans. Polygamy was not in use, except among the princes, and among them only for the fake of multiplying their alliances. Divorces were prohibited by manners rather than by laws. Adulteries were, punished as rare and inexpiable crimes; nor was

.vienisar

⁵⁴ Esprit des Loix, l. xxx. c. 3. The brilliant imagination of Montesquieu is corrected, however, by the dry cold reason of the Abbé de Mably. Observations sur l'Histoire de France, tom. i.

⁵⁵ Gaudent muneribus, sed nec data imputant, nec acceptis obligantur. Tacit. Germ. c. 21.

CHAP feduction justified by example and fashion 56. We may eafily discover, that Tacitus indulges an honest pleasure in the contrast of barbarian virtue, with the diffolute conduct of the Roman ladies: yet there are some striking circumstances that give an air of truth, or at least of probability, to the conjugal faith and chaftity of the Germans of the Conquest of the Rosensta

Its probable caufes.

German

Although the progress of civilization has undoubtedly contributed to affuage the fiercer paffions of human nature, it feems to have been less favourable to the virtue of chastity, whose most dangerous enemy is the fofuness of the mind. The refinements of life corrupt while they polish the intercourse of the sexes. The gross appetite of love becomes most dangerous when it is elechaffire vated, or rather, indeed, difguifed by fentimental passion. The elegance of dress, of motion, and of manners, gives a luftre to beauty, and inflames the fenfes through the imagination. Luxurious entertainments, midnight dances, and licentious spectacles, present at once temptation and opportunity to female frailty 57. From fuch dangers the unpolified wives of the barbarians were secured, by poverty, solitude, and the painful cares of a domestic life. The German huts. open, on every fide, to the eye of indifcretion or

> 56 The adulteress was whipped through the village. Neither wealth nor beauty could inspire compassion, or procure her a second husband, 18, 19. Lyldade at Adult.

⁵⁷ Ovid employs two hundred lines in the research of places the most favourable to love. Above all, he considers the theatre as the best adapted to collect the beauties of Rome, and to melt them into tenderness and sensuality.

jealousy, were a better safeguard of conjugal CHAP. fidelity, than the walls, the bolts, and the eunuchs of a Persian haram. To this reason, another may be added of a more honourable nature. The Germans treated their women with esteem and confidence, confulted them on every occasion of importance, and fondly believed, that in their breafts refided a fanctity and wisdom, more than human. Some of these interpreters of fate, such as Velleda, in the Batavian war, governed in the name of the deity, the fiercest nations of Germany 58. The rest of the fex, without being adored as goddesses, were respected as the free and equal companions of foldiers; affociated even by the marriage ceremony to a life of toil, of danger, and of glory 59. In their great invafions, the camps of the barbarians were filled with a multitude of women, who remained firm and undaunted amidst the found of arms, the various forms of destruction, and the honourable wounds of their fons and husbands 60. Fainting armies of Germans have more than once been driven back upon the enemy, by the generous despair of the women, who dreaded death much less than servitude. If the day was irrecoverably loft, they well knew how to deliver themselves and their children, with their own hands, from

⁵⁸ Tacit. Hift. iv. 61. 65.

⁵⁹ The marriage present was a yoke of oxen, horses, and arms. See Germ. c. 18. Tacitus is somewhat too florid on the subject.

⁶⁰ The change of exigere into exugere is a most excellent correction.

CHAP. an infulting victor 61. Heroines of fuch a cast may claim our admiration; but they were most affuredly neither lovely, nor very susceptible of love. Whilst they affected to emulate the stern virtues of man, they must have resigned that attractive foftness in which principally consist the charm and weakness of woman. Conscious pride taught the German females to suppress every tender emotion that stood in competition with honour, and the first honour of the sex has ever been that of chastity. The sentiments and conduct of these high-spirited matrons may, at once, be confidered as a cause, as an effect, and as a proof of the general character of the nation. Female courage, however it may be raifed by fanaticism, or confirmed by habit, can be only a faint and imperfect imitation of the manly valour that distinguishes the age or country in which it may be found.

Religion.

The religious system of the Germans (if the wild opinions of favages can deferve that name) was dictated by their wants, their fears, and their ignorance 62. They adored the great visible objects and agents of Nature, the Sun and the

Moon,

⁶¹ Tacit. Germ. c. 7. Plutarch in Mario. Before the wives of the Tentones destroyed themselves and their children, they had offered to furrender, on condition that they should be received as the flaves of the veftal virgins.

⁶² Tacitus has employed a few lines, and Cluverius one hundred and twenty-four pages, on this obscure subject. The former difcovers in Germany the gods of Greece and Rome. The latter is positive, that, under the emblems of the sun, the moon, and the fire, his pious ancestors worshipped the Trinity in unity.

Moon, the Fire and the Earth; together with CHAP. those imaginary deities, who were supposed to preside over the most important occupations of human life. They were perfuaded, that, by fome ridiculous arts of divination, they could discover the will of the superior beings, and that human facrifices were the most precious and acceptable offering to their altars. Some applause has been hastily bestowed on the sublime notion, entertained by that people, of the Deity, whom they neither confined within the walls of a temple, nor represented by any human figure; but when we recollect, that the Germans were unskilled in architecture, and totally unacquainted with the art of sculpture, we shall readily affign the true reason of a scruple, which arose not fo much from a superiority of reason, as from a want of ingenuity. The only temples in Germany were dark and ancient groves, confecrated by the reverence of fucceeding generations. Their fecret gloom, the imagined residence of an invisible power, by presenting no distinct object of fear or worship, impressed the mind with a still deeper sense of religious horror 63; and the priefts, rude and illiterate as they were, had been taught by experience the use of every artifice that could preferve and fortify impressions so well fuited to their own interest.

⁶³ The facred wood, described with such sublime horror by Lucan, was in the neighbourhood of Marseilles; but there were many of the same kind in Germany.

C H A P.
IX.

Its effects in peace,

The same ignorance, which renders barbarians incapable of conceiving or embracing the useful restraints of laws, exposes them naked and unarmed to the blind terrors of superstition. German priefts, improving this favourable temper of their countrymen, had affumed a jurifdiction, even in temporal concerns, which the magistrate could not venture to exercise; and the haughty warrior patiently submitted to the lash of correction, when it was inflicted, not by any human power, but by the immediate order of the god of war 64. The defects of civil policy were fometimes supplied by the interpolition of ecclefiaftical authority. The latter was confantly exerted to maintain filence and decency in the popular affemblies; and was fometimes extended to a more enlarged concern for the national welfare. A folemn procession was occafionally celebrated in the present countries of Mecklenburg and Pomerania. The unknown fymbol of the Earth, covered with a thick veil, was placed on a carriage drawn by cows; and in this manner the goddess, whose common residence was in the isle of Rugen, visited several adjacent tribes of her worshippers. During her progress, the found of war was hushed, quarrels were fuspended, arms laid aside, and the restless Germans had an opportunity of tasting the bleffings of peace and harmony 63. The truce of God, fo often and fo ineffectually proclaimed by the

64 Tacit, Germania, c. 7.

4 Tacit, Germania, c. 40.

clergy

le

clergy of the eleventh century, was an obvious CHAP. imitation of this ancient custom 66.

But the influence of religion was far more in wars powerful to inflame, than to moderate, the fierce passions of the Germans. Interest and fanaticism often prompted its ministers to fanctify the most daring and the most unjust enterprises, by the approbation of Heaven, and full affurances of fuccefs. The confecrated standards, long revered in the groves of superstition, were placed in the front of the battle 67; and the hostile army was devoted with dire execrations to the gods of war and of thunder 68. In the faith of foldiers (and fuch were the Germans) cowardice is the most unpardonable of sins. A brave man was the worthy favourite of their martial deities; the wretch, who had loft his shield, was alike banished from the religious and the civil assemblies of his countrymen. Some tribes of the north feem to have embraced the doctrine of transmigration 69, others imagined a gross paradife of immortal drunkenness 70. All agreed, that a life spent in arms, and a glorious death in battle, were the best preparations for a happy futurity, either in this or in another world.

⁶⁶ See Dr. Robertson's History of Charles V. vol. i. note 10.

⁶⁷ Tacit. Germ. c. 7. These standards were only the heads of wild beafts.

⁶⁸ See an instance of this custom, Tacit. Annal. xiii. 57.

⁶⁹ Cæfar, Diodorus, and Lucan, seem to ascribe this doctrine to the Gauls, but M. Pelloutier (Histoire des Celtes, 1. iii. c. 18.) labours to reduce their expressions to a more orthodox sense.

⁷º Concerning this gross but alluring doctrine of the Edda, see Fable xx. in the curious version of that book, published by M. Mallet, in his Introduction to the History of Denmark.

The immortality fo vainly promifed by the priefts, was, in some degree conferred by the The bards. That fingular order of men has most deservedly attracted the notice of all who have attempted to investigate the antiquities of the Celts, the Scandinavians, and the Germans. Their genius and character, as well as the reverence paid to that important office, have been fufficiently illustrated. But we cannot so easily express, or even conceive, the enthusiasm of arms and glory, which they kindled in the breaft of their audience. Among a polished people, a tafte for poetry is rather an amusement of the fancy, than a passion of the soul. And yet, when in calm retirement we peruse the combats described by Homer or Tasso, we are insensibly feduced by the fiction, and feel a momentary glow of martial ardour. But how faint, how cold is the fensation which a peaceful mind can receive from folitary study! It was in the hour of battle, or in the feast of victory, that the bards celebrated the glory of heroes of ancient days, the ancestors of those warlike chieftains, who liftened with transport to their artless but animated strains. The view of arms and of danger heightened the effect of the military fong; and the passions which it tended to excite, the defire of fame, and the contempt of death, were the habitual fentiments of a German mind 71

Such

b

to

fe

fa

ir

th

Ca

fp

in fair

the fpa

⁷¹ See Tacit. Germ. c. 3. Diodor. Sicul. l. v. Strabo, l. iv. P. 197. The claffical reader may remember the rank of Demodocus

Such was the fituation, and fuch were the CHAP. manners, of the ancient Germans. Their climate, their want of learning, of arts, and of Causes which laws, their notions of honour, of gallantry, and checked of religion, their fense of freedom, impatience gress of of peace, and thirst of enterprise, all contributed the Germans. to form a people of military heroes. And yet we find, that, during more than two hundred and fifty years that elapfed from the defeat of Varus to the reign of Decius, these formidable barbarians made few confiderable attempts, and not any material impression on the luxurious and enslaved provinces of the empire. Their progress was checked by their want of arms and discipline, and their fury was diverted by the intestine divisions of ancient Germany.

I. It has been observed, with ingenuity, and Want of not without truth, that the command of iron foon gives a nation the command of gold. But the rude tribes of Germany, alike destitute of both those valuable metals, were reduced flowly to acquire, by their unaffifted ftrength, the poffession of the one as well as the other. The face of a German army displayed their poverty of iron. Swords, and the longer kind of lances, they could feldom use. Their frameæ (as they called them in their own language) were long spears headed with a sharp but narrow iron point,

in the Phæacian court, and the ardour infused by Tyrtæus into the fainting Spartans. Yet there is little probability that the Greeks and the Germans were the same people. Much learned trifling might be spared, if our antiquarians would condescend to reflect, that similar manners will naturally be produced by fimilar fituations.

CHAP, and which, as occasion required, they either darted from a distance or pushed in close onset. With this spear, and with a shield, their cavalry was contented. A multitude of darts, scattered 72 with incredible force, were an additional resource of the infantry. Their military dress, when they wore any, was nothing more than a loofe mantle. A variety of colours was the only ornament of their wooden or ofier shields. Few of the chiefs were distinguished by cuirasses, fcarce any by helmets. Though the horses of Germany were neither beautiful, swift, nor practised in the skilful evolutions of the Roman manage, feveral of the nations obtained renown by their cavalry; but, in general, the principal strength of the Germans consisted in their infantry 73, which was drawn up in feveral deep columns, according to the distinction of tribes and families. Impatient of fatigue or delay, these half-armed warriors rushed to battle with disfonant shouts and disordered ranks; and sometimes, by the effort of native valour, prevailed over the constrained and more artificial bravery of the Roman mercenaries. But as the barbarians poured forth their whole fouls on the first onset, they knew not how to rally or to retire. A repulse was a sure defeat; and a defeat was most commonly total destruction. When we

and of difcipline.

⁷² Miffilia spargunt, Tacit. Germ. c. 6. Either that historian used a vague expression, or he meant that they were thrown at ran-

⁷³ It was their principal distinction from the Sarmatians, who generally fought on horseback. recollect

recollect the complete armour of the Roman C. H.A.P. foldiers, their discipline, exercises, evolutions, fortified camps, and military engines, it appears a just matter of furprise how the naked and unaffifted valour of the barbarians could dare to encounter in the field, the strength of the legions, and the various troops of the auxiliaries, which feconded their operations. The contest was too unequal, till the introduction of luxury had enervated the vigour, and a spirit of disobedience and fedition had relaxed the discipline, of the Roman armies. The introduction of barbarian auxiliaries into those armies, was a measure attended with very obvious dangers, as it might gradually instruct the Germans in the arts of war and of policy. Although they were admitted in fmall numbers and with the strictest precaution, the example of Civilis was proper to convince the Romans, that the danger was not imaginary, and that their precautions were not always fufficient 74. During the civil wars that followed the death of Nero, that artful and intrepid Batavian, whom his enemies condescended to compare with Hannibal and Sertorius 75, formed a great design of freedom and ambition. Eight Batavian cohorts, renowned in the wars of Britain and Italy, repaired to his standard. He introduced an army of Germans into Gaul, prevailed

⁷⁴ The relation of this enterprise occupies a great part of the fourth and fifth books of the History of Tacitus, and is more remarkable for its eloquence than perspicuity. Sir Henry Saville has observed several inaccuracies.

⁷⁵ Tacit. Hift. iv. 13. Like them, he had loft an eye.

embrace his cause, deseated the legions, destroyed their fortisted camps, and employed against the Romans the military knowledge which he had acquired in their service. When at length, after an obstinate struggle, he yielded to the power of the empire, Civilis secured himself and his country by an honourable treaty. The Batavians still continued to occupy the islands of the Rhine 76, the allies not the servants of the Roman mo-

Civil diffentions of Germany narchy.

II. The strength of ancient Germany appears formidable, when we consider the effects that might have been produced by its united effort. The wide extent of country might very possibly contain a million of warriors, as all who were of age to bear arms were of a temper to use them. But this fierce multitude, incapable of concerting or executing any plan of national greatness, was agitated by various and often hostile inten-Germany was divided into more than forty independent states; and even in each state the union of the feveral tribes was extremely loose and precarious. The barbarians were easily provoked; they knew not how to forgive an injury, much less an insult; their resentments were bloody and implacable. The cafual disputes that fo frequently happened in their tumultuous parties of hunting or drinking, were fufficient to

inflame

⁷⁶ It was contained between the two branches of the old Rhine, as they subsisted before the face of the country was changed by art and nature. See Cluver, German. Antiq. 1. iii. c. 30. 37.

inflame the minds of whole nations; the private CHAP. feud of any considerable chieftains diffused itself among their followers and allies. To chaftife the infolent, or to plunder the defenceless, were alike causes of war. The most formidable states of Germany affected to encompass their territories with a wide frontier of folitude and devastation. The awful distance preserved by their neighbours, attested the terror of their arms. and in fome measure defended them from the danger of unexpected incursions 77.

"The Bructeri (it is Tacitus who now speaks) fomented " were totally exterminated by the neighbouring licy of " tribes 78, provoked by their infolence, allured Rome. " by the hopes of spoil, and perhaps inspired by " the tutelar deities of the empire. Above fixty " thousand barbarians were destroyed; not by " the Roman arms, but in our fight, and for " our entertainment. May the nations, enemies " of Rome, ever preserve this enmity to each " other! We have now attained the utmost " verge of prosperity 79, and have nothing left " to demand of Fortune, except the discord of " these barbarians so." These sentiments, less

77 Cæfar de Bell. Gall. 1. vi. 23.

worthy

⁷⁸ They are mentioned however in the ivth and vth centuries by Nazarius, Ammianus, Claudian, &c. as a tribe of Franks. See Cluver. Germ. Antiq. 1. iii. c. xiii.

⁷⁹ Urgentibus is the common reading, but good sense, Lipsius, and fome MSS. declare for Vergentibus.

⁸⁰ Tacit. Germania, c. 33. The pious Abbé de la Bleterie is very angry with Tacitus, talks of the devil who was a murderer from the beginning, &c. &c.

CHAP. worthy of the humanity than of the patriotism of Tacitus, express the invariable maxims of the policy of his countrymen. They deemed it a much safer expedient to divide than to combat the barbarians, from whose defeat they could derive neither honour nor advantage. The money and negociations of Rome infinuated themselves into the heart of Germany; and every art of feduction was used with dignity, to coneiliate those nations whom their proximity to the Rhine or Danube might render the most useful friends, as well as the most troublesome enemies. Chiefs of renown and power were flattered by the most trifling presents, which they received either as marks of distinction, or as the instruments of luxury. In civil dissentions, the weaker faction endeavoured to strengthen its interest by entering into fecret connexions with the governors of the frontier provinces. Every quarrel among the Germans was fomented by the intrigues of Rome; and every plan of union and public good was defeated by the stronger bias of private jealoufy and interest 81.

Transient union against Marcus Antoninus.

The general conspiracy which terrified the Romans under the reign of Marcus Antoninus, comprehended almost all the nations of Germany, and even Sarmatia, from the mouth of the Rhine

to u

W fi

r

n

fi

[&]amp; Many traces of this policy may be discovered in Tacitus and Dion; and many more may be inferred from the principles of human

to that of the Danube 82. It is impossible for CHAP. us to determine whether this hafty confederation was formed by necessity, by reason, or by pasfion; but we may rest assured, that the barbarians were neither allured by the indolence, or provoked by the ambition, of the Roman monarch. This dangerous invalion required all the firmness and vigilance of Marcus. He fixed generals of ability in the feveral stations of attack, and affumed in person the conduct of the most important province on the Upper Danube. After a long and doubtful conflict, the spirit of the barbarians was fubdued. The Quadi and the Marcomanni 83, who had taken the lead in the war, were the most severely punished in its catastrophe. They were commanded to retire five miles 4 from their own banks of the Danube, and to deliver up the flower of the youth, who were immediately fent into Britain, a remote island, where they might be secure as hostages, and useful as foldiers 85. On the frequent rebellions of the Quadi and Marcomanni, the irritated emperor refolved to reduce their country

82 Hift. August. p. 31. Ammian. Marcellin. l. xxxi. c. 5. Aurel. Victor. The emperor Marcus was reduced to sell the rich furniture of the palace, and to inlist slaves and robbers.

83 The Marcomanni, a colony, who, from the banks of the Rhine, occupied Bohemia and Moravia, had once erected a great and formidable monarchy under their king Maroboduus. See Strabo, l. vii. Vell. Pat. ii. 105. Tacit. Annal. ii. 63.

84 Mr. Wotton (History of Rome, p. 166.) increases the prohibition to ten times the distance. His reasoning is specious, but not conclusive. Five miles were sufficient for a fortified barrier.

^{\$5} Dion, I. lxxi. and lxxii.

CHAP. into the form of a province. His deligns were disappointed by death. This formidable league. however, the only one that appears in the two first centuries of the Imperial history, was entirely diffipated, without leaving any traces behind in Germany.

Distinction of the Ger-

In the course of this introductory chapter, we man tribes. have confined ourselves to the general outlines of the manners of Germany, without attempting to describe or to distinguish the various tribes which filled that great country in the time of Cæsar, of Tacitus, or of Ptolemy. As the ancient, or as new tribes fuccessively present themselves in the feries of this history, we shall concisely mention their origin, their fituation, and their particular character. Modern nations are fixed and permanent focieties, connected among themselves by laws and government, bound to their native. foil by arts and agriculture. The German tribes were voluntary and fluctuating affociations of foldiers, almost of favages. The same territory often changed its inhabitants in the tide of conquest and emigration. The same communities, uniting in a plan of defence or invalion, bestowed a new title on their new confederacy. The diffolution of an ancient confederacy restored to the independent tribes their peculiar but long forgotten appellation. A victorious state often communicated its own name to a vanquished Sometimes crowds of volunteers flocked from all parts to the standard of a favourite leader; his camp became their country, and fome circumstance of the enterprise soon gave a common

mon denomination to the mixed multitude. distinctions of the ferocious invaders were perpetually varied by themselves, and confounded by the astonished subjects of the Roman empire 86.

The CHAP.

Wars, and the administration of public affairs, Numbers. are the principal subjects of history; but the number of persons interested in these busy scenes, is very different, according to the different condition of mankind. In great monarchies, millions of obedient subjects pursue their useful occupations in peace and obscurity. The attention of the Writer, as well as of the Reader, is folely confined to a court, a capital, a regular army, and the districts which happen to be the occafional scene of military operations. But a state of freedom and barbarism, the season of civil commotions, or the fituation of petty republics 87, raises almost every member of the community into action, and confequently into notice. The irregular divisions, and the restless motions, of the people of Germany, dazzle our imagination, and feem to multiply their numbers. The profuse enumeration of kings and warriors, of armies and nations, inclines us to forget that the fame objects are continually repeated under a variety of appellations, and that the most splendid appellations have been frequently lavished on the most inconsiderable objects.

⁸⁶ See an excellent differtation on the origin and migrations of nations, in the Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xviii. p. 48-71. It is feldom that the antiquarian and the philosopher are so happily blended.

⁸⁷ Should we suspect that Athens contained only 21,000 citizens, and Sparta no more than 39,000? See Hume and Wallace on the number of mankind in ancient and modern times.

off I blanch on the impost of displements xion June at the state of the section of the sections

CHAP. 'X.

The Emperors Decius, Gallus, Amilianus, Valerian, and Gallienus .- The general Irruption of the Barbarians .- The thirty Tyrants.

of the fubject. A. D. 248 -268.

CHAP. TROM the great fecular games celebrated by Philip, to the death of the emperor Gallie-The nature nus, there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. During that calamitous period, every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted, by barbarous invaders and military tyrants, and the ruined empire feemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its diffolution. The confusion of the times, and the fcarcity of authentic memorials, oppose equal difficulties to the historian, who attempts to preferve a clear and unbroken thread of narration. Surrounded with imperfect fragments, always concife, often obscure, and sometimes contradictory, he is reduced to collect, to compare, and to conjecture: and though he ought never to place his conjectures in the rank of facts, yet the knowledge of human nature, and of the fure operation of its fierce and unrestrained passions, might, on some occasions, supply the want of historical materials.

The empe-For Philip.

There is not, for instance, any difficulty in conceiving, that the fuccessive murders of so many emperors had loofened all the ties of allegiance between the prince and people; that all

the generals of Philip were disposed to imitate CHAP. the example of their master; and that the caprice of armies, long fince habituated to frequent and violent revolutions, might every day raife to the throne the most obscure of their fellow-soldiers. History can only add, that the rebellion against the emperor Philip broke out in the fummer of the year two hundred and forty-nine, among the legions of Mæsia; and that a subaltern officer', named Marinus, was the object of their feditious choice. Philip was alarmed. He dreaded left the treason of the Mæssan army should prove the first spark of a general conflagration. Distracted with the consciousness of his guilt and of his danger, he communicated the intelligence to the fenate. A gloomy filence prevailed, the effect of fear, and perhaps of disaffection: till at length Services, Decius, one of the affembly, affuming a spirit revolt, vicworthy of his noble extraction, ventured to dif- reign of cover more intrepidity than the emperor feemed ror Decrus. to posses. He treated the whole business with A.D. 249. contempt, as a hasty and inconsiderate tumult, and Philip's rival as a phantom of royalty, who in a very few days would be destroyed by the fame inconstancy that had created him. speedy completion of the prophecy inspired Philip with a just esteem for so able a counsellor; and Decius appeared to him the only person capable of restoring peace and discipline to an army, whose tumultuous spirit did not immedi-

the empe-

1 The expression used by Zosimus and Zonaras may signify that Marinus commanded a century, a cohort, or a legion.

CHAP, ately subside after the morder of Marinus. Decius, who long refifted his own nomination, feems to have infinuated the danger of prefenting a leader of merit, to the angry and apprehensive minds of the foldiers; and his prediction was again confirmed by the event. The legions of Mæsia forced their judge to become their accomplice. They left him only the alternative of death or the purple. His subsequent conduct, after that decifive measure, was unavoidable. He conducted, or followed, his army to the confines of Italy, whither Philip, collecting all his force to repel the formidable competitor whom he had raifed up, advanced to meet him. The Imperial troops were fuperior in number2; but the rebels formed an army of veterans, commanded by an able and experienced leader. Philip was either killed in the battle, or put to death a few days afterwards at Verona. His fon and affociate in the empire was maffacred at Rome by the Prætorian guards; and the victorious Decius, with more favourable circumstances than the ambition of that age can usually plead, was univerfally acknowledged by the senate and provinces. It is reported, that, immediately after his reluctant acceptance of the title of Au-

gustus,

² His birth at Bubalia, a little village in Pannonia (Eutrop. ix. Victor. in Cesarib. et Epitom.), seems to contradict, unless it was merely accidental, his supposed descent from the Decii. Six hundred years had bestowed nobility on the Decii; but at the commencement of that period, they were only Plebeians of merit, and among the first who shared the consulship with the haughty Patricians. Plebeiæ Deciorum animæ, &c. Juvenal, Sat. viii. 254-See the spirited speech of Decius, in Livy, x. 9, so.

gustus, he had affured Philip by a private mef- C H A P. fage, of his innocence and loyalty, folemnly protesting, that, on his arrival in Italy, he would refign the Imperial ornaments, and return to the condition of an obedient subject. His professions might be fincere. But in the fituation where fortune had placed him, it was fearcely possible that he could either forgive or be forgiven 3.

The emperor Decius had employed a few He marchmonths in the works of peace and the administra- es against the Goths. tion of justice, when he was summoned to the A.D.250. banks of the Danube by the invafion of the GOTHS. This is the first considerable occasion in which hiftory mentions that great people, who afterwards broke the Roman power, facked the Capitol, and reigned in Gaul, Spain, and Italy. So memorable was the part which they acted in the subversion of the Western empire, that the name of Goths is frequently but improperly used as a general appellation of rude and warlike barbarism.

In the beginning of the fixth century, and after Origin of the conquest of Italy, the Goths, in possession of the Goths from Scanpresent greatness, very naturally indulged them-dinavia. felves in the prospect of past and of future glory. They wished to preserve the memory of their ancestors, and to transmit to posterity their own atchievements. The principal minister of the court of Ravenna, the learned Cassiodorus, gratified the inclination of the conquerors in a Gothic history, which confifted of twelve books, now reduced to

³ Zohmus, l. i. p. 20. Zonaras, l. xii. p. 624. Edit. Louvre.

Daine

CHAP. the imperfect abridgment of Jornandes 4. These writers paffed with the most artful conciseness over the misfortunes of the nation, celebrated its fuccessful valour, and adorned the triumph with many Afiatic trophies, that more properly belonged to the people of Scythia. On the faith of ancient fongs, the uncertain, but the only, memorials of barbarians, they deduced the first origin of the Goths, from the vast island, or peninfula, of Scandinavia 5. That extreme country of the North was not unknown to the conquerors of Italy; the ties of ancient confanguinity had been strengthened by recent offices of friendship; and a Scandinavian king had cheerfully abdicated his favage greatness, that he might pass the remainder of his days in the peaceful and polished court of Ravenna . Many vestiges, which cannot be ascribed to the arts of popular vanity, attest the ancient residence of the Goths in the countries beyond the Baltic. From the time of the geographer Ptolemy, the fouthern part of Sweden feems to have continued in the possession of the less enterprising remnant of the nation, and a large territory is even at present divided into east and west Gothland. During the middle ages (from the ninth to the twelfth century) whilst Christianity was advancing with a flow progress into the north, the Goths and the Swedes com-

⁴ See the prefaces of Cassiodorus and Jornandes: it is surprising that the latter should be omitted in the excellent edition published by Grotius, of the Gothic writers.

⁵ On the authority of Ablavius, Jornandes quotes some old Gothic chronicles in verse. De Reb. Geticis, c. 4.

⁶ Jornandes, c. 3.

posed two distinct and sometimes hostile mem- CHAP. bers of the same monarchy?. The latter of these two names has prevailed without extinguishing the former. The Swedes, who might well be fatisfied with their own fame in arms, have, in every age, claimed the kindred glory of the Goths. In a moment of discontent against the court of Rome, Charles the Twelfth infinuated, that his victorious troops were not degenerated from their brave ancestors, who had already subdued the mistress of the world 8.

Till the end of the eleventh century, a cele- Religion brated temple subsisted at Upsal, the most consi- Goths. derable town of the Swedes and Goths. It was enriched with the gold which the Scandinavians had acquired in their piratical adventures, and fanclified by the uncouth representations of the three principal deities, the god of war, the goddess of generation, and the god of thunder. In the general festival, that was solemnized every ninth year, nine animals of every species (without excepting the human) were facrificed, and their bleeding bodies suspended in the facred grove adjacent to the temple °. The only traces

7 See in the Prolegomena of Grotius some large extracts from Adam of Bremen, and Saxo-Grammaticus. The former wrote in the year 1077, the latter flourished about the year 1200.

8 Voltaire, Histoire de Charles XII. l. iii. When the Austrians defired the aid of the court of Rome against Gustavus Adolphus they always represented that conqueror as the lineal successor of Alaric. Harte's History of Gustavus, vol. ii. p. 123.

9 See Adam of Bremen in Grotii Prolegomenis, p. 104. The temple of Upfal was destroyed by Ingo king of Sweden, who began

d

CHAP. that now subsist of this barbaric superstition are contained in the Edda, a system of mythology, compiled in Iceland about the thirteenth century, and studied by the learned of Denmark and Sweden, as the most valuable remains of their ancient traditions.

Institutions and death of Odin.

Notwithstanding the mysterious obscurity of the Edda, we can eafily distinguish two persons confounded under the name of Odin; the god of war, and the great legislator of Scandinavia. The latter, the Mahomet of the north, instituted a religion adapted to the climate and to the people. Númerous tribes on either fide of the Baltic were subdued by the invincible valour of Odin, by his perfualive eloquence, and by the fame, which he acquired, of a most skilful magician. The faith that he had propagated; during a long and prosperous life, he confirmed by a voluntary death. Apprehensive of the ignominious approach of disease and infirmity, he refolved to expire as became a warrior. In a folemn affembly of the Swedes and Goths, he wounded himself in nine mortal places, hastening away (as he afferted with his dying voice) to prepare the feast of heroes in the palace of the god of war ".

Agreeable but uncertain hypocerning Odin.

The native and proper habitation of Odin is distinguished by the appellation of As-gard. The thesis con- happy resemblance of that name with As-burg,

> his reign in the year 1075, and about fourfcore years afterwards a Christian cathedral was erected on its ruins. See Dalin's History of Sweden, in the Bibliotheque Raisonnee.

To Mallet, Introduction à l'Histoire du Dannemarc.

or As-of", words of a similar signification, has CHAP. given rife to an historical system of so pleasing a contexture, that we could almost wish to persuade ourselves of its truth. It is supposed that Odin was the chief of a tribe of barbarians which dwelt on the banks of the lake Mæotis, till the fall of Mithridates and the arms of Pompey menaced the north with fervitude. That Odin, yielding with indignant fury to a power which he was unable to relift, conducted his tribe from the frontiers of the Afiatic Sarmatia into Sweden, with the great defign of forming, in that inaccessible retreat of freedom, a religion and a people, which, in some remote age, might be subservient to his immortal revenge; when his invincible Goths, armed with martial fanaticism, should issue in numerous swarms from the neighbourhood of the Polar circle, to chaftife the oppressors of mankind 12.

If so many successive generations of Goths were Emigracapable of preserving a faint tradition of their tion of the Goths Scandinavian origin, we must not expect, from from Scan-

dinavia into Pruf-

r

¹¹ Mallet, c. iv. p. 55, has collected from Strabo, Pliny, Pto- sia. lemy, and Stephanus Byzantinus, the vestiges of such a city and people.

¹² This wonderful expedition of Odin, which, by deducing the enmity of the Goths and Romans from so memorable a cause, might fupply the noble groundwork of an Epic poem, cannot fafely be received as authentic history. According to the obvious sense of the Edda, and the interpretation of the most skilful critics, As-gard, instead of denoting a real city of the Asiatic Sarmatia, is the sectitious appellation of the mystic abode of the gods, the Olympus of Scandinavia; from whence the prophet was supposed to descend, when he announced his new religion to the Gothic nations, who were already feated in the fouthern parts of Sweden.

and to hois

Cotis five Sean

digital luri bini

C fi A P. fuch unlettered barbarians, any distinct account of the time and circumstances of their emigration. To cross the Baltic was an easy and natural attempt. The inhabitants of Sweden were masters of a sufficient number of large vessels, with oars 13, and the distance is little more than one hundred miles from Carlscroon to the nearest ports of Pomerania and Prussia. Here, at length, we land on firm and historic ground. At least as early as the Christian æra 14, and as late as the age of the Antonines15, the Goths were established towards the mouth of the Vistula, and in that fertile province where the commercial cities of Thorn, Elbing, Koningsberg, and Dantzick were long afterwards founded 16. Westward of the Goths, the numerous tribes of the Vandals were spread along the banks of the Oder, and the fea-coast of Pomerania and Mecklenburgh. A striking refemblance of manners, complexion, religion, and language, feemed to indicate that the Vandals and the Goths were originally one great people 17. The latter appear to have been fub-

divided

¹³ Tacit. Germania, c. 44.

¹⁴ Tacit. Annal. ii. 62. If we could yield a firm affent to the navigations of Pytheas of Marseilles, we must allow that the Goths had passed the Baltic at least three hundred years before Christ.

¹⁵ Ptolemy, 1. ii.

¹⁶ By the German colonies who followed the arms of the Teutonic knights. The conquest and conversion of Prussia were completed by those adventurers in the xiiith century.

¹⁷ Pliny (Hift. Natur. iv. 14.), and Procopius (in Bell. Vandal. . i. c. 1.) agree in this opinion. They lived in distant ages, and possessed different means of investigating the truth.

divided into Oftrogoths, Vifigoths, and Gepidæ18. CHAP. The distinction among the Vandals was more strongly marked by the independent names of Heruli, Burgundians, Lombards, and a variety of other petty states, many of which, in a future age, expanded themselves into powerful monarethological do consogs differential tags chies.

In the age of the Antonines, the Goths were From still seated in Prussia. About the reign of Alex- Prussia to the Ukander Severus, the Roman province of Dacia had raine. already experienced their proximity by frequent and destructive inroads 19. In this interval, therefore, of about feventy years, we must place the fecond migration of the Goths from the Baltic to the Euxine; but the cause that produced it lies concealed among the various motives which actuate the conduct of unfettled barbarians. Either a pestilence, or a famine, a victory, or a defeat, an oracle of the Gods, or the eloquence of a daring leader, were fufficient to impel the Gothic arms on the milder climates of the fouth. Besides the influence of a martial religion, the numbers and spirit of the Goths were equal to

¹⁸ The Offro and Vist, the eastern and western Goths obtained those denominations from their original feats in Scandinavia. In all their future marches and fettlements they preserved, with their names, the same relative situation. When they first departed from Sweden, the infant colony was contained in three veffels. The third being a heavy failer lagged behind, and the crew, which afterwards fwelled into a nation, received from that circumstance the appellation of Gepidæ or Loiterers. Jornandes, c. 17.

¹⁹ See a fragment of Peter Patricius in the Excerpta Legationum; and with regard to its probable date, fee Tillemont, Hift. des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 346.

CHAP. the most dangerous adventures. The use of round bucklers and fhort fwords rendered them formidable in a close engagement; the manly obedience which they yielded to hereditary kings, gave uncommon union and stability to their councils 20: and the renowned Amala, the hero of that age, and the tenth ancestor of Theodoric, king of Italy, enforced, by the ascendant of personal merit, the prerogative of his birth, which he derived from the Anses, or demigods of the Gothic nation 27.

The Gothic nation increases in its march.

The fame of a great enterprise excited the bravest warriors from all the Vandalic states of Germany, many of whom are feen a few years afterwards combating under- the common standard of the Goths 22. The first motions of the emigrants carried them to the banks of the Prypec, a river univerfally conceived by the ancients to be the fouthern branch of the Borysthenes 23. The windings of that great stream through the plains of Poland and Russia gave a direction to their line of march, and a constant supply of fresh water and pasturage to their numerous herds of

²⁰ Omnium harum gentium infigne, rotunda scuta, breves gladii, et erga reges obsequium. Tacit. Germania, c. 43. The Goths probably acquired their iron by the commerce of amber.

²¹ Jornandes, c. 13, 14.

²⁵ The Heruli, and the Uregundi or Burgundi, are particularly mentioned. See Mascou's History of the Germans, 1. v. A pasfage in the Augustan History, p. 28, seems to allude to this great emigration. The Marcomannic war was partly occasioned by the pressure of barbarous tribes, who fled before the arms of more porthern barbarians.

²³ D'Anville, Geographie Ancienne, and the third part of his incomparable map of Europe.

id

1-

i+

e

e, of

-

d

.

e

f

cattle. They followed the unknown course of CHAP. the river, confident in their valour, and careless of whatever power might oppose their progress. The Bastarnæ and the Venedi were the first who presented themselves; and the flower of their youth, either from choice or compulsion, increased the Gothic army. The Bastarnæ dwelt on the northern fide of the Carpathian mountainss the immense tract of land that separated the Bastarnæ from the savages of Finland, was possessed, or rather wasted, by the Venedi 24: we have some reason to believe that the first of these nations. which distinguished itself in the Macedonian war 25, and was afterwards divided into the formidable tribes of the Peucini, the Borani, the Carpi, &c. derived its origin from the Germans. With better authority, a Sarmatian extraction may be assigned to the Venedi, who rendered themselves fo famous in the middle ages 26. But Distinction the confusion of blood and manners on that of Germans and doubtful frontier often perplexed the most accu+ Sarmarate observers 27. As the Goths advanced near the Euxine sea, they encountered a purer race of Sarmatians, the Jazyges, the Alani, and the Roxolani; and they were probably the first Germans who faw the mouths of the Borysthenes, and of the Tanais. If we inquire into the cha-

racteristic

²⁴ Tacit. Germania, c. 46.

²⁵ Cluver, Germ. Antiqua, 1. iii. c. 43.

²⁶ The Venedi, the Slavi, and the Antes, were the three great tribes of the same people. Jornandes, c. 24.

²⁷ Tacitus most affuredly deserves that title, and even his cautious suspense is a proof of his diliment inquiries.

CHAP. racteristic marks of the people of Germany and of Sarmatia, we shall discover that those two great portions of human kind were principally diftinguished by fixed huts or moveable tents, by a close dress, or flowing garments, by the marriage of one or of feveral wives, by a military force, consisting, for the most part, either of infantry or cavalry; and above all by the use of the Teutonic, or of the Sclavonian language; the last of which has been diffused by conquest, from the confines of Italy to the neighbourhood of Japan.

Descrip-Ukraine.

racterified

The Goths were now in possession of the Ukraine, a country of considerable extent and uncommon fertility, interfected with navigable rivers, which, from either side, discharge themfelves into the Borysthenes; and interspersed with large and lofty forests of oaks. The plenty of game and fish, the innumerable bee-hives, depofited in the hollow of old trees, and in the cavities of rocks, and forming, even in that rude age, a valuable branch of commerce, the fize of the cattle, the temperature of the air, the aptness of the foil for every species of grain, and the luxuriancy of the vegetation, all displayed the liberality of Nature, and tempted the industry of man 28. But the Goths withstood all these temptations, and still adhered to a life of idleness, of poverty, and of rapine.

t

²⁸ Genealogical History of the Tartars, p. 593. Mr. Bell (vol. li. p. 379.) traversed the Ukraine in his journey from Petersburgh to Constantinople. The modern face of the country is a just reprefentation of the ancient, fince, in the hands of the Coffacks, it still remains in a state of nature.

The Scythian hords, which, towards the east, CHAP. bordered on the new fettlements of the Goths. presented nothing to their arms, except the doubt- The Goths ful chance of an unprofitable victory. But the Roman prospect of the Roman territories was far more provinces. alluring; and the fields of Dacia were covered with rich harvests, sown by the hands of an industrious, and exposed to be gathered by those of a warlike, people. It is probable, that the conquests of Trajan, maintained by his successors, less for any real advantage, than for ideal dignity, had contributed to weaken the empire on that fide. The new and unfettled province of Dacia was neither flrong enough to resist, nor rich enough to fatiate, the rapaciousness of the barbarians. As long as the remote banks of the Niester were considered as the boundary of the Roman power, the fortifications of the Lower Danube were more carelessly guarded, and the inhabitants of Mæsia lived in supine security, fondly conceiving themselves at an inaccessible distance from any barbarian invaders. The irruptions of the Goths, under the reign of Philip, fatally convinced them of their mistake. The king, or leader of that fierce nation, traverfed with contempt the province of Dacia, and paffed both the Niester and the Danube without encountering any opposition capable of retarding his progress. The relaxed discipline of the Roman troops betrayed the most important posts, where they were stationed, and the fear of deferved punishment induced great numbers of them to inlift under

under the Gothic standard. The various multitude of barbarians appeared, at length, under the walls of Marcianopolis, a city built by Trajan in honour of his fifter, and at that time the capital of the fecond Mæsia 29. The inhabitants confented to ranfom their lives and property, by the payment of a large fum of money, and the invaders retreated back into their deferts, animated, rather than satisfied, with the first success of their arms against an opulent but feeble country. Intelligence was foon transmitted to the emperor Decius, that Cniva, king of the Goths, had passed the Danube a second time, with more considerable forces; that his numerous detachments scattered devastation over the province of Mæsia, whilst the main body of the army, confifting of feventy thousand Germans and Sarmatians, a force equal to the most daring atchievements, required the presence of the Roman monarch, and the exertion of his military power.

Various events of the Gothic A.D. 250.

Decius found the Goths engaged before Nicopolis, on the Jatrus, one of the many monuments of Trajan's victories 30. On his approach they raised the siege, but with a design only of marching away to a conquest of greater import-

ance,

an

fo

of

a

w

ta

W

th

th

fo

lo

CO

Pe

CC

fp

TO

de

R

th

CC

n

P

m of

Pl

²⁹ In the fixteenth chapter of Jornandes, instead of fecundo Mæfiam, we may venture to substitute secundam, the second Mæsia, of which Marcianopolis was certainly the capital (see Hierocles de Provinciis, and Wesseling ad locum, p. 636. Itinerar.). It is surprifing how this palpable error of the scribe could escape the judicious correction of Grotius.

³⁰ The place is still called Nicop. The little stream, on whose banks it stood, falls into the Danube. D'Anville, Geographie Ancienne, tom. i. p. 307.

ance, the siege of Philippopolis, a city of Thrace, CHAP. founded by the father of Alexander, near the foot of mount Hæmus 32. Decius followed them through a difficult country, and by forced marches; but when he imagined himself at a considerable diftance from the rear of the Goths, Cniva turned with rapid fury on his purfuers. The camp of the Romans was furprifed and pillaged, and, for the first time, their emperor sled in disorder before a troop of half-armed barbarians. After a long refiftance, Philippopolis, destitute of succour, was taken by ftorm. A hundred thousand persons are reported to have been massacred in the fack of that great city 32. Many prisoners of consequence became a valuable accession to the spoil; and Priscus, a brother of the late emperor Philip, blufhed not to affume the purple under the protection of the barbarous enemies of Rome 33. The time, however, confumed in that tedious fiege, enabled Decius to revive the courage, restore the discipline, and recruit the numbers of his troops. He intercepted feveral parties of Carpi, and other Germans, who were hastening to share the victory of their countrymen 34, intrusted the passes of the mountains to officers of approved valour and fidelity 35, repair-

³¹ Stephan. Byzant. de Urbibus, p. 740. Wesseling Itinerar. p. 136. Zonaras, by an odd mistake, ascribes the foundation of Philippopolis to the immediate predecessor of Decius.

³² Ammian. xxxi. 5. 33 Aurel. Victor. c. 29.

³⁴ Victoria Carpica, on some medals of Decius, infinuate these advantages.

³⁵ Claudius (who afterwards reigned with fo much glory) was posted in the pass of Thermopylæ with 200 Dardanians, 100 heavy

CHAP, ed and strengthened the fortifications of the Danube, and exerted his utmost vigilance to oppose either the progress or the retreat of the Goths. Encouraged by the return of fortune, he anxiously waited for an opportunity to retrieve, by a great and decifive blow, his own glory, and that of the Roman arms 36 million aid no wall blear disk

Decius revives the office of cenfor in the person of Valeri-

At the fame time when Decius was ftruggling with the violence of the tempest, his mind, calm and deliberate amidst the tumult of war, investigated the more general causes, that, fince the age of the Antonines, had fo impetuously urged the decline of the Roman greatness. He foon discovered that it was impossible to replace that greatness on a permanent basis, without restoring public virtue, ancient principles and manners, and the oppressed majesty of the laws. To execute this noble but arduous defign, he first resolved to revive the obsolete office of censor; an office, which, as long as it had sublisted in its pristine integrity, had so much contributed to the perpetuity of the state 37, till it was usurped and gradually neglect-

t

"

"

"

"

*

..

"

"

..

*

23

*

vii

ful

to t

Thate the victory of their countrees and 160 light horse, 60 Cretan archers, and 1000 well-armed recruits. See an original letter from the emperor to his officer, in the Augustan History, p. 200.

36 Jornandes, c. 16-18. Zofimus, l. i. p. 22. In the general account of this war, it is easy to discover the opposite prejudices of the Gothic and the Grecian writer. In careleffness alone they are alike isbaud and radiple

37 Montesquieu, Grandeur et Decadence des Romains, c. viii. He illustrates the nature and use of the censorship with his usual ingenuity, and with uncommon precision. ed

active (who excrete description with fo repeatedly) was

er pour or Theoretica er have Dardaniana, sea beavy

2.46

ed by the Cæfars 38. Confcious that the favour CHAP.

of the fovereign may confer power, but that the efteem of the people can alone bestow authority, he submitted the choice of the censor to the unbiassed voice of the senate. By their unanimous A.D. 251. votes, or rather acclamations, Valerian, who ber. was afterwards emperor, and who then ferved with distinction in the army of Decius, was declared the most worthy of that exalted honour. As foon as the decree of the fenate was transmitted to the emperor, he affembled a great council in his camp, and, before the investiture of the cenfor elect, he apprized him of the difficulty and importance of his great office. " Happy Valerian," faid the prince, to his diftinguished subject, " happy in the general appro-" bation of the senate and of the Roman repub-" lic! Accept the cenforship of mankind; and " judge of our manners. You will felect those " who deserve to continue members of the se-" nate; you will restore the equestrian order to " its ancient fplendour; you will improve the " revenue, yet moderate the public burdens. "You will distinguish into regular classes the " various and infinite multitude of citizens, and " accurately review the military strength, the " wealth, the virtue, and the resources of Rome.

Vespasian and Titus were the last censors (Pliny Hist. Natur. vii. 49. Censorinus de Die Natali). The modesty of Trajan refused an honour which he deserved, and his example became a law to the Antonines. See Pliny's Panegyric, c. 45 and 60.

"Your decisions shall obtain the force of laws." The army, the palace, the ministers of justice,

VOL. I.

Dd

" and

CHAP. " and the great officers of the empire, are all " fubject to vour tribunal. None are exempted, excepting only the ordinary confuls 30, the " prefect of the city, the king of the facrifices, " and (as long as the preserves her chastity in-" violate) the eldest of the vestal virgins. Even " these few, who may not dread the severity, will anxiously solicit the esteem, of the Roman " cenfor "" " selt is verson them all boiles

The defign impracticable and without effect.

A magistrate, invested with such extensive powers, would have appeared not fo much the minister as the colleague of his fovereign ". Valerian justly dreaded an elevation fo full of envy and of suspicion. He modestly urged the alarming greatness of the trust, his own infufficiency, and the incurable corruption of the times. He artfully infinuated, that the office of cenfor was infeparable from the Imperial dignity, and that the feeble hands of a subject were unequal to the support of such an immense weight of cares and of power 42. The approaching event of war foon put an end to the profecution of a project fo specious but so impracticable; and whilst it preserved Valerian from the danger, faved the emperor Decius from the disappointment, which would most probably have attended

bor 33

³⁹ Yet in spite of this exemption Pompey appeared before that tribunal, during his confulship. The occasion indeed was equally fingular and honourable. Plutarch in Pomp. p. 630.

⁴⁰ See the original speech, in the Augustan Hist. p. 173, 174.

⁴¹ This transaction might deceive Zonaras, who supposes that Valerian was actually declared the colleague of Decius, l. xii. p. 625.

⁴² Hift. August, p. 174. The emperor's reply is omitted.

it. A censor may maintain, he can never restore, CHAP. the morals of a state. It is impossible for such a magistrate to exert his authority with benefit, or even with effect, unless he is supported by a quick sense of honour and virtue in the minds of the people; by a decent reverence for the public opinion, and by a train of useful prejudices combating on the fide of national manners. In a period when these principles are annihilated, the censorial jurisdiction must either sink into empty pageantry, or be converted into a partial inftrument of vexatious oppression 43. It was easier to vanguish the Goths, than to eradicate the public vices; yet even in the first of these enterprises, Decius loft his army and his life.

The Goths were now, on every fide, furround- Defeat and ed and pursued by the Roman arms. The flower Decius and of their troops had perished in the long siege of his son. Philippopolis, and the exhausted country could no longer afford sublistence for the remaining multitude of licentious barbarians. Reduced to this extremity, the Goths would gladly have purchased, by the surrender of all their booty and prisoners, the permission of an undisturbed retreat. But the emperor, confident of victory, and refolving, by the chastisement of these invaders, to strike a falutary terror into the nations of the North, refused to listen to any terms of accommodation. The high-spirited barbarians preferred death to flavery. An obscure

⁴³ Such as the attempts of Augustus towards a reformation of manners, Tacit. Annal. iii. 24.

CHAP. town of Mæsia, called Forum Terebronii 4, was the scene of the battle. The Gothic army was drawn up in three lines, and, either from choice or accident, the front of the third line was covered by a morafs. In the beginning of the action, the fon of Decius, a youth of the fairest hopes, and already affociated to the honours of the purple, was flain by an arrow, in the fight of his afflicted father; who fummoning all his fortitude, admonished the dismayed troops, that the loss of a single soldier was of little importance to the republic 45. The conflict was terrible; it was the combat of despair against grief and rage. The first line of the Goths at length gave way in disorder; the second, advancing to fustain it, shared its fate; and the third only remained entire, prepared to dispute the passage of the morals, which was imprudently attempted by the prefumption of the enemy. " Here the " fortune of the day turned, and all things be-" came adverse to the Romans: the place deep " with ooze, finking under those who stood, slip-" pery to fuch as advanced; their armour heavy, the waters deep; nor could they wield, in that " uneafy fituation, their weighty javelins. " barbarians, on the contrary, were enured to " encounters in the bogs, their persons tall, " their spears long, such as could wound at a

2 W CT

town

⁴⁴ Tillemont, Histoire des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 598. As Zofimus and some of his followers mistake the Danube for the Tanais, they place the field of battle in the plains of Scythia.

⁴⁵ Aurelius Victor allows two distinct actions for the deaths of the two Decii; but I have preferred the account of Jornandes.

[&]quot; distance."

" distance 46." In this morass the Roman army, CHAP. after an ineffectual struggle, was irrecoverably loft; nor could the body of the emperor ever be found 47. Such was the fate of Decius, in the fiftieth year of his age; an accomplished prince, active in war, and affable in peace 48; who, together with his fon, has deferved to be compared, both in life and death, with the brightest examples of ancient virtue 49.000 an ball golding

This fatal blow humbled, for a very little time, Election of the infolence of the legions. They appear to A.D. 251. have patiently expected, and submissively obey- December. ed, the decree of the fenate, which regulated the fuccession to the throne. From a just regard for the memory of Decius, the Imperial title was conferred on Hostilianus, his only surviving fon; but an equal rank, with more effectual power, was granted to Gallus, whose experience and ability feemed equal to the great trust of guardian to the young prince and the

distressed empire 50. The first care of the new emperor was to deliver the Illyrian provinces

⁴⁶ I have ventured to copy from Tacitus (Annal. i. 64.) the pic. ture of a similar engagement between a Roman army and a German

⁴⁷ Jornandes, c. 18. Zosimus, l. i. p. 22. Zonaras, l. xii. p. 627. Aurelius Victor.

⁴⁸ The Decii were killed before the end of the year two hundred and fifty-one, fince the new princes took possession of the consulship on the ensuing calends of January.

⁴⁹ Hift. August. p. 223. gives them a very honourable place among the small number of good emperors who reigned between Augustus and Diocletian.

⁵⁰ Hæc ubi Patres comperere decernunt, Cæfaribus.

Retreat of the Goths.

CHAP from the intolerable weight of the victorious Goths. He confented to leave in their hands A.D. 252. the rich fruits of their invasion, an immense booty, and, what was still more difgraceful, a great number of prisoners of the highest merit and quality. He plentifully supplied their camp with every conveniency that could affuage their angry spirits, or facilitate their so much wishedfor departure; and he even promifed to pay them annually a large fum of gold, on condition they should never afterwards infest the Roman terri-

Gallus purchases peace by the pay-ment of an annual tribute.

In the age of the Scipios, the most opulent kings of the earth, who courted the protection of the victorious commonwealth, were gratified with fuch trifling presents as could only derive a value from the hand that bestowed them; an ivory chair, a coarse garment of purple, an inconfiderable piece of plate, or a quantity of copper coin 52. After the wealth of nations had centred in Rome, the emperors displayed their greatness, and even their policy, by the regular exercife of a steady and moderate liberality towards the allies of the state. They relieved the poverty of the barbarians, honoured their merit, and recompensed their fidelity. These voluntary marks of bounty were understood to flow not from the fears, but merely from the generofity

⁵¹ Zonaras, 1. xii. p. 628.

⁵² A Sella, a Toga, and a golden Patera of five pounds weight, were accepted with joy and gratitude by the wealthy king of Egypt (Livy, xxvii. 4.). Quina Millia Æris, a weight of copper in value about eighteen pounds sterling, was the usual present made to foreign ambaffadors (Livy, xxxi. 9.). endin or

or the gratitude of the Romans; and whilst pre- CHAP. fents and subsidies were liberally distributed among friends and suppliants, they were sternly refused to such as claimed them as a debt 53. But this stipulation of an annual payment to a Popular victorious enemy, appeared without difguise in the light of an ignominious tribute; the minds of the Romans were not yet accustomed to accept fuch unequal laws from a tribe of barbarians; and the prince, who by a necessary concession had probably faved his country, became the object of the general contempt and aversion. The death of Hostilianus, though it happened in the midst of a raging pestilence, was interpreted as the personal crime of Gallus 54; and even the defeat of the late emperor was ascribed by the voice of suspicion to the perfidious counfels of his hated fuccessor 55. The tranquillity which the empire enjoyed during the first year of his administration 56, served rather to inflame than to appeale the public discontent; and, as foon as the apprehensions of war were removed, the infamy of the peace was more deeply and more fenfibly felt. Margarit and the harmonical entering

^{. 53} See the firmness of a Roman general so late as the time of Alexander Severus, in the Excerpta Legationum, p. 25. Edit. Louvre.

⁵⁴ For the plague, see Jornandes, c. 19. and Victor in Cæsari-

⁵⁵ These improbable accusations are alleged by Zosimus, l. i.

⁵⁶ Jornandes, c. 19. The Gothic writer at least observed the peace which his victorious countrymen had fworn to Gallus.

Victory
and revolt
of Æmilianus.
A, D. 2535

But the Romans were irritated to a still higher degree, when they discovered that they had not even secured their repose, though at the expence of their honour. The dangerous secret of the wealth and weakness of the empire, had been revealed to the world. New swarms of barbarians, encouraged by the fuccess, and not conceiving themselves bound by the obligation, of their brethren, fpread devastation through the Illyrian provinces, and terror as far as the gates of Rome. The defence of the monarchy, which feemed abandoned by the pufillanimous emperor, was affumed by Æmilianus, governor of Pannonia and Mæsia; who rallied the scattered forces, and revived the fainting spirits of the troops. The barbarians were unexpectedly attacked, routed, chased, and pursued beyond the Danube. The victorious leader distributed as a donative the money collected for the tribute, and the acclamations of the foldiers proclaimed him emperor on the field of battle 57. Gallus, who, careless of the general welfare, indulged himself in the pleasures of Italy, was almost in the same instant informed of the success, of the revolt, and of the rapid approach, of his aspiring lieutenant, He advanced to meet him as far as the plains of Spoleto. When the armies came in fight of each other, the foldiers of Gallus compared the ignominious conduct of their fovereign with the glory of his rival. They admired the valour of Æmilianus; they were attracted by his liberality,

for he offered a considerable increase of pay to CHAP. all deferters 18. The murder of Gallus, and of his fon Volusianus, put an end to the civil war; Gallus a-bandoned and the senate gave a legal fanction to the rights and slain. of conquest. The letters of Æmilianus to that May. affembly, displayed a mixture of moderation and vanity. He affured them, that he should refign to their wisdom the civil administration; and, contenting himself with the quality of their general, would in a short time affert the glory of Rome, and deliver the empire from all the barbarians both of the North and of the East 19. His pride was flattered by the applause of the fenate; and medals are still extant, representing him with the name and attributes of Hercules the Victor, and of Mars the Avenger 60.

If the new monarch possessed the abilities, he Valerian wanted the time, necessary to fulfil these splendid the death promises. Less than four months intervened of Gallus, and is acbetween his victory and his fall 61. He had van- knowledgquished Gallus: he sunder the weight of a ed empecompetitor more formidable than Gallus. That unfortunate prince had fent Valerian, already diftinguished by the honourable title of censor, to bring the legions of Gaul and Germany 62 to his aid. Valerian executed that commission with zeal and fidelity; and as he arrived too late to

119

the obtervation of an ancient writer, had been

⁵⁸ Victor in Cæfaribus.

⁵⁹ Zonaras, 1. xii. p. 628.

⁶⁰ Banduri Numismata, p. 94.

⁶¹ Eutropius, 1. ix. c. 6. fays tertio mense. Eusebius omits this about the must receive all the build emperor.

⁶² Zosimus, 1. i. p. 28. Eutropius and Victor station Valerian's army in Rhætia. To supraiseld florings arend, will to significance

A. D. 253. August.

CHAP. fave his fovereign, he refolved to revenge him. The troops of Æmilianus, who still lay encamped in the plains of Spoleto, were awed by the fanctity of his character, but much more by the fuperior strength of his army; and as they were now become as incapable of personal attachment as they had always been of conftitutional principle, they readily imbrued their hands in the blood of a prince who fo lately had been the object of their partial choice. The guilt was theirs, but the advantage of it was Valerian's; who obtained the possession of the throne by the means indeed of a civil war, but with a degree of innocence fingular in that age of revolutions; fince he owed neither gratitude nor allegiance to his predecessor, whom he dethroned.

Character of Valerian.

of Circlins.

on si bas

kn wledge

Valerian was about fixty years of age 63 when he was invested with the purple, not by the caprice of the populace, or the clamours of the army, but by the unanimous voice of the Roman world. In his gradual afcent through the honours of the state, he had deferved the favour of virtuous princes, and had declared himfelf the enemy of tyrants 64. His noble birth, his mild but unblemished manners, his learning, prudence, and experience, were revered by the fenate and people; and if mankind (according to the observation of an ancient writer) had been

left

1

a

a

h

a

e

R

te

n

T

fi

ir

h

h

a

fa

fo

ei

in

ar

fo

cei

pir

⁶³ He was about seventy at the time of his accession, or, as it is more probable, of his death. Hist. August. p. 173. Tillemont, Hift. des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 893, note 1.

⁶⁴ Inimicus Tyrannorum. Hift. August. p. 173. In the glorious struggle of the senate against Maximin, Valerian acted a very spirited part. Hist. August. p. 156.

left at liberty to chuse a master, their choice CHAP. would most afforedly have fallen on Valerian 65. Perhaps the merit of this emperor was inadequate to his reputation; perhaps his abilities, or at least his spirit, were affected by the languor and coldness of old age. The consciousness of General his decline engaged him to share the throne with misfora younger and more active affociate 66: the the reigns emergency of the times demanded a general no and Galliless than a prince; and the experience of the enus. Roman cenfor might have directed him where 253-268. to bestow the Imperial purple, as the reward of military merit. But instead of making a judicious choice, which would have confirmed his reign and endeared his memory, Valerian, confulting only the dictates of affection or vanity, immediately invested with the supreme honours his fon Gallienus, a youth whose effeminate vices had been hitherto concealed by the obscurity of a private station. The joint government of the father and the fon subsisted about seven, and the fole administration of Gallienus continued about eight, years. But the whole period was one uninterrupted feries of confusion and calamity. As the Roman empire was at the fame time, and on every fide, attacked by the blind fury of foreign invaders, and the wild ambition of do-

. CHUTT

mestic

⁶⁵ According to the diffinction of Victor, he seems to have received the title of Imperator from the army, and that of Augustus from the senate.

⁶⁶ From Victor and from the medals, Tillemont (tom. iii. p. 710.) very justly infers, that Gallienus was affociated to the empire about the month of August of the year 253.

the barba-

CHAP. mestic usurpers, we shall consult order and perspicuity, by purfuing, not fo much the doubtful arrangement of dates, as the more natural distribution of subjects. The most dangerous enemies of Rome, during the reigns of Valerian Inroads of and Gallienus, were, 1. The Franks. 2. The Alemanni. 3. The Goths; and, 4. The Perfians. Under these general appellations, we may comprehend the adventures of less considerable tribes, whose obscure and uncouth names would d A only ferve to oppress the memory and perplex the attention of the reader. The mil soll wolfed or

cy of the Franks.

Charle

S' Pam

Origin and I. As the posterity of the Franks compose one of the greatest and most enlightened nations of Europe, the powers of learning and ingenuity have been exhausted in the discovery of their unlettered ancestors. To the tales of credulity, have succeeded the systems of fancy. Every paffage has been fifted, every fpot has been furveyed, that might possibly reveal some faint traces of their origin. It has been supposed, that Pannonia 47, that Gaul, that the northern parts of Germany 68, gave birth to that celebrated colony of warriors. At length the most rational critics, rejecting the fictitious emigrations of ideal conquerors, have acquiesced in a fentiment whose simplicity persuades us of its

> 67 Various systems have been formed to explain a difficult passage in Gregory of Tours, l. ii. c. 9.

pire around the fronth of Analyth of the year again.

n

P

t

e

d

h

C

P

f

t

th

ta

to

m

⁶⁸ The Geographer of Ravenna, i. 11. by mentioning Mauringanis on the confines of Denmark, as the ancient feat of the Franks, gave birth to an ingenious fystem of Leibnitz.

truth 69. They suppose, that about the year two CHAP. hundred and forty 70, a new confederacy was formed under the name of Franks, by the old inhabitants of the Lower Rhine and the Wefer. The present circle of Westphalia, the Landgraviate of Hesse, and the duchies of Brunswick and Luneburg, were the ancient feat of the Chauci, who, in their inaccessible morasses, defied the Roman arms "; of the Cherusci, proud of the fame of Arminius; of the Catti, formidable by their firm and intrepid infantry; and of feveral other tribes of inferior power and renown 72. The love of liberty was the ruling passion of these Germans; the enjoyment of it their best treasure; the word that expressed that enjoyment, the most pleasing to their ear. They deserved, they assumed, they maintained the honourable epithet of Franks or Freemen; which concealed, though it did not extinguish, the peculiar names of the feveral states of the confederacy 73. Tacit confent, and mutual advantage, dictated the first laws of the union; it was gradually cemented by habit and experience.

69 See Cluver. Germania Antiqua, l. iii. c. 20. M. Freret, in the Memoires des l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. xviii.

7º Most probably under the reign of Gordian, from an accidental circumstance fully canvassed by Tillemont, tom. iii. p. 710.

71 Plin. Hift. Natur. xvi. 1. The panegyrists frequently allude to the morasses of the Franks.

72 Tacit. Germania, c. 30. 37.

73 In a subsequent period, most of those old names are occasionally mentioned. See some vestiges of them in Cluver, Germ. Antiq. 1. iii.

signification with M mont vaction The

medicated in Religious and

comparison with the Helvetic body; in which every canton, retaining its independent sovereignty, consults with its brethren in the common cause, without acknowledging the authority of any supreme head, or representative assembly 74. But the principle of the two consederacies was extremely different. A peace of two hundred years has rewarded the wise and honest policy of the Swiss. An inconstant spirit, the thirst of rapine, and a disregard to the most solemn treaties, disgraced the character of the Franks.

They invade Gaul,

The Romans had long experienced the daring valour of the people of Lower Germany. The union of their strength threatened Gaul with a more formidable invalion, and required the prefence of Gallienus, the heir and colleague of Imperial power 75. Whilst that prince, and his infant fon Salonius, displayed, in the court of Treves, the majesty of the empire, its armies were ably conducted by their general Posthumus, who, though he afterwards betrayed the family of Valerian, was ever faithful to the great interest of the monarchy. The treacherous language of panegyrics and medals darkly announces a long feries of victories. Trophies and titles attest (if such evidence can attest) the same of Posthumus, who is repeatedly styled The conqueror of the Germans, and the faviour of Gaul 76.

⁷⁴ Simler de Republica Helvet. cum notis Fuselin.

⁷⁵ Zohmus, 1. i. p. 27.

⁷⁶ M. de Brequigny (in the Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xxx.) has given us a very curious life of Posthumus. A series of the Augustan History from Medals and Inscriptions has been more than once planned, and is still much wanted.

But a fingle fact, the only one indeed of which CHAP. we have any distinct knowledge, erases, in a great measure, these monuments of vanity and adula- ravage Spain, tion. The Rhine, though dignified with the title of Safeguard of the provinces, was an imperfect barrier against the daring spirit of enterprise with which the Franks were actuated. Their rapid devastations stretched from the river to the foot of the Pyrenees: nor were they stopped by those mountains. Spain, which had never dreaded, was unable to resist, the inroads of the Germans. During twelve years, the greatest part of the reign of Gallienus, that opulent country was the theatre of unequal and destructive hostilities. Tarragona, the flourishing capital of a peaceful province, was facked and almost destroyed "; and fo late as the days of Orofius, who wrote in the fifth century, wretched cottages, scattered amidst the ruins of magnificent cities, still recorded the rage of the barbarians 78. When the exhausted country no longer supplied a variety of plunder, the Franks feized on some vessels in the ports of Spain 19, and transported themselves into and pass Mauritania. The distant province was astonished over into with the fury of these barbarians, who seemed to

⁷⁷ Aurel. Victor, c. 33. Instead of Pane direpto, both the sense and the expression require deleto; though indeed, for different reafons, it is alike difficult to correct the text of the best, and of the worst, writers.

⁷⁸ In the time of Ausonius (the end of the fourth century) Ilerda or Lerida was in a very ruinous state (Auson. Epist. xxv. 58.), which probably was the consequence of this invasion.

⁷⁹ Valefius is therefore mistaken in supposing that the Franks had invaded Spain by fea.

CHAP. fall from a new world, as their name, manners, and complexion, were equally unknown on the coaft of Africa 80.

crei asvo

Origin and II. In that part of Upper Saxony beyond the renown of Elbe, which is at present called the Marquisate of Luface, there existed, in ancient times, a sacred wood, the awful feat of the superstition of the Suevi. None were permitted to enter the holy precincts, without confessing, by their servile bonds and suppliant posture, the immediate prefence of the fovereign Deity 81. Patriotism contributed as well as devotion to confecrate the Sonnenwald, or wood of the Semnones 82. It was univerfally believed, that the nation had received its first existence on that sacred spot. At stated periods, the numerous tribes who gloried in the Suevic blood, reforted thither by their ambaffadors; and the memory of their common extraction was perpetuated by barbaric rites and human facrifices. The wide extended name of Suevi filled the interior countries of Germany, from the banks of the Oder to those of the Danube. They were distinguished from the other Germans by their peculiar mode of dreffing their long hair, which they gathered into a rude knot on the crown of the head; and they delighted in an ornament that shewed their ranks more lofty and terrible in the eyes of the enemy 83. Jealous, as the Germans were, of military renown, they

al

w

d

n

0

R

f

⁸⁰ Aurel. Victor. Eutrop. ix. 6.

⁸¹ Tacit. Germania, 38. 82 Chuver. Germ. Antiq. iii. 25.

⁸³ Sic Suevi a ceteris Germanis, fic Suevorum ingenui a servis separantur. A proud separation!

all confessed the superior valour of the Suevi; and the tribes of the Usipetes and Tencteri, who, with a vast army, encountered the dictator Cæsar, declared that they esteemed it not a disgrace to have fled before a people, to whose arms the immortal gods themselves were unequal 84.

In the reign of the emperor Caracalla, an innumerable swarm of Suevi appeared on the banks Suevi afof the Mein, and in the neighbourhood of the Roman provinces, in quest either of food, of Alemanni, plunder, or of glory 85. The hasty army of volunteers gradually coalefced into a great and permanent nation, and, as it was composed from fo many different tribes, assumed the name of Allemanni, or All-men; to denote at once their various lineage, and their common bravery 86. The latter was foon felt by the Romans in many a hostile inroad. The Alemanni fought chiefly on horseback; but their cavalry was rendered still more formidable by a mixture of light infantry, felected from the bravest and most active of the youth, whom frequent exercise had enured to accompany the horseman in the longest march, the most rapid charge, or the most precipitate retreat 87.

A mixed fume the name of

⁸⁴ Cæfar in Bello Gallico, iv. 7.

⁸⁵ Victor in Caracal. Dion Cassius, Ixvii. p. 1350.

⁸⁶ This etymology (far different from those which amuse the fancy of the learned) is preserved by Asinius Quadratus, an original historian, quoted by Agathias, i. c. 5.

⁸⁷ The Suevi engaged Cæsar in this manner, and the manœuvre deserved the approbation of the conqueror (in Bello Gallico, i. 48.).

CHAP. invade Gaul and Italy,

basing I

Janamal Fr

to whole Active 25

This warlike people of Germans had been aftonished by the immense preparations of Alexander Severus, they were dismayed by the arms of his fuccessor, a barbarian equal in valour and fierceness to themselves. But still hovering on the frontiers of the empire, they increased the general disorder that ensued after the death of Decius. They inflicted fevere wounds on the rich provinces of Gaul: they were the first who removed the veil National Victor that covered the feeble majesty of Italy. A numerous body of the Alemanni penetrated across the Danube, and through the Rhætian Alps, into the plains of Lombardy, advanced as far as Ravenna, and displayed the victorious banners of barbarians almost in fight of Rome ss. The infult and the danger rekindled in the fenate fome sparks of their ancient virtue. Both the emperors were engaged in far distant wars, Valerian in the east, and Gallienus on the Rhine. All the hopes and resources of the Romans were in themfelves. In this emergency, the fenators refumed the defence of the republic, drew out the Prætorian guards, who had been left to garrison the capital, and filled up their numbers, by inlifting into the public service the stoutest and most willing of the Plebeians. The Alemanni, aftonished with the fudden appearance of an army more numerous than their own, retired into Germany, laden with spoil; and their retreat was esteemed as a victory by the unwarlike Romans 89.

are repulfed from Rome by the fenate and people.

89 Zofimus, l. i. p. 34.

When

⁸⁸ Hiff. August. p. 215, 216. Dexippus in the Excerpta Legationum, p. 8. Hieronym. Chron. Orofius, vii. 22.

When Gallienus received the intelligence that CHAP. his capital was delivered from the barbarians, he was much less delighted, than alarmed, with the tors excourage of the senate, since it might one day cluded by prompt them to rescue the public from domestic from the tyranny, as well as from foreign invalion. His military timid ingratitude was published to his subjects, in an edict which prohibited the fenators from exercifing any military employment, and even from approaching the camps of the legions. But his fears were groundless. The rich and luxurious nobles, finking into their natural character, accepted, as a favour, this difgraceful exemption from military service; and as long as they were indulged in the enjoyment of their baths, their theatres, and their villas, they cheerfully refigned the more dangerous cares of empire, to the rough hands of peafants and foldiers 90.

Another invasion of the Alemanni, of a more Gallienus formidable aspect, but more glorious event, is contracts an alliance mentioned by a writer of the lower empire. with the Alemanni. Three hundred thousand of that warlike people are faid to have been vanquished, in a battle near Milan, by Gallienus in person, at the head of only ten thousand Romans 91. We may however, with great probability, ascribe this incredible victory, either to the credulity of the historian, or to some exaggerated exploits of one of the emperor's lieutenants. It was by arms of a very

on I all the said premated the Line

⁹⁰ Aurel. Victor, in Gallieno et Probo. His complaints breathe an uncommon spirit of freedom.

⁹¹ Zonaras, 1. xii. p. 631.

CHAP. different nature, that Gallienus endeavoured to protect Italy from the fury of the Germans. He espoused Pipa the daughter of a king of the Marcomanni, a Suevic tribe, which was often confounded with the Alemanni in their wars and conquests 92. To the father, as the price of his alliance, he granted an ample fettlement in Pannonia. The native charms of unpolished beauty feem to have fixed the daughter in the affections of the inconstant emperor, and the bands of policy were more firmly connected by those of love. But the haughty prejudice of Rome still refused the name of marriage, to the profane mixture of a citizen and a barbarian; and has fligmatized the German princess with the opprobrious title of concubine of Gallienus 93. IV il to have the state of

Inroads of the Goths.

III. We have already traced the emigration of the Goths from Scandinavia, or at least from Prussia, to the mouth of the Borysthenes, and have followed their victorious arms from the Borysthenes to the Danube. Under the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus, the frontier of the last mentioned river was perpetually infested by the inroads of Germans and Sarmatians; but it was defended by the Romans with more than usual firmness and success. The provinces that were the feat of war, recruited the armies of Rome with an inexhaustible supply of hardy foldiers; and more than one of these Illyrian peasants at-

tained

⁹² One of the Victors calls him King of the Marcomanni; the other, of the Germans.

⁹³ See Tillemont, Hift. des Empereurs, tom. iii. p. 398, &c.

tained the station, and displayed the abilities, of CHAP. a general. Though flying parties of the barbarians, who incessantly hovered on the banks of the Danube, penetrated sometimes to the confines of Italy and Macedonia; their progress was commonly checked, or their return intercepted, by the Imperial lieutenants 94. But the great stream of the Gothic hostilities was diverted into a very different channel. The Goths, in their new fettlement of the Ukraine, foon became masters of the northern coast of the Euxine: to the south of that inland fea, were fituated the foft and wealthy provinces of Asia Minor, which possessed all that could attract, and nothing that could relift, a barbarian conqueror.

The banks of the Borysthenes are only fixty Conquest miles distant from the narrow entrance 95 of the phorus by peninsula of Crim Tartary, known to the ancients the Goths, under the name of Chersonesus Taurica 96. On that inhospitable shore, Euripides, embellishing with exquisite art the tales of antiquity, has placed the frene of one of his most affecting tragedies 97. The bloody facrifices of Diana, the arrival of Orestes and Pylades, and the triumph of virtue and religion over savage fierceness, serve to represent an historical truth, that the Tauri,

⁹⁴ See the lives of Claudius, Aurelian, and Probus, in the Augustan History.

⁹⁵ It is about half a league in breadth. Genealogical History of the Tartars, p. 598.

⁹⁶ M. de Peyssonel, who had been French consul at Caffa, in his Observations sur les Peuples Barbares, qui ont habité les bords du Danube.

⁹⁷ Euripides in Iphigenia in Taurid.

Thursday)

dell'adi to th Hartin

the Come.

CHAP, the original inhabitants of the peninfula, were, in some degree, reclaimed from their brutal manners, by a gradual intercourse with the Grecian colonies, which fettled along the maritime coast. The little kingdom of Bosphorus, whose capital was fituated on the Straits, through which the Mæotis communicates itself to the Euxine, was composed of degenerate Greeks, and half-civilized barbarians. It subsisted, as an independent state, from the time of the Peloponnesian war 98, was at last swallowed up by the ambition of Mithridates 99, and, with the rest of his dominions, funk under the weight of the Roman arms. From the reign of Augustus 100, the kings of Bosphorus were the humble, but not useless, allies of the empire. By presents, by arms, and by a slight fortification drawn across the Ishmus, they effectually guarded against the roving plunderers of Sarmatia, the access of a country, which, from its peculiar fituation and convenient harbours, commanded the Euxine sea and Asia Minor 101. As long as the sceptre was possessed by a lineal fuccession of kings, they acquitted themselves of their important charge with vigilance and fuccefs. Domestic factions, and the fears, or private in-

and

City W

⁹⁸ Strabo, l. vii. p. 309. The first kings of Bosphorus were the allies of Athens. 99 Appian in Mithridat.

¹⁰⁰ It was reduced by the arms of Agrippa. Orofius, vi. 21. Eutropius, vii: 9. The Romans once advanced within three days march of the Tanais. Tacit. Annal. xii. 17.

¹⁰¹ See the Toxaris of Lucian, if we credit the fincerity and the virtues of the Scythian, who relates a great war of his nation against the kings of Bosphorus. Since Well alreaded I all bull

terest, of obscure usurpers, who seized on the CHAP. vacant throne, admitted the Goths into the heart of Bosphorus. With the acquisition of a superfluous waste of fertile soil, the conquerors obtained the command of a naval force, sufficient to transport their armies to the coast of Alia 102. The ships used in the navigation of the Euxine who acwere of a very fingular construction. They were quire a naval force. flight flat-bottomed barks framed of timber only, without the least mixture of iron, and occasionally covered with a shelving roof, on the appearance of a tempest 103. In these floating houses, the Goths carelessly trusted themselves to the mercy of an unknown sea, under the conduct of failors pressed into the service, and whose skill and fidelity were equally fuspicious. But the hopes of plunder had banished every idea of danger, and a natural fearlessness of temper supplied. in their minds the more rational confidence, which is the just result of knowledge and experience. Warriors of fuch a daring spirit must have often murmured against the cowardice of their guides, who required the strongest affurances of a fettled calm before they would venture to embark; and would scarcely ever be tempted to lose fight of the land. Such, at least, is the practice of the modern Turks 104; and they are probably not inferior, in the art of navigation, to the ancient inhabitants of Bosphorus,

¹⁰² Zosimus, l. i. p. 28.

¹⁰³ Strabo, l. xi. Tacit. Hift. iii. 47 .- They were called Camara.

³⁰⁴ See a very natural picture of the Euxine ravigation, in the zvith letter of Tournefort.

424

First naval expedition of the Goths.

The fleet of the Goths, leaving the coast of Circassia on the left hand, first appeared before Pityus 105, the utmost limits of the Roman provinces; a city provided with a convenient port and fortified with a strong wall. Here they met with a relistance more obstinate than they had reason to expect from the seeble garrison of a distant fortress. They were repulsed; and their disappointment seemed to diminish the terror of the Gothic name. As long as Successianus, an officer of superior rank and merit, defended that frontier, all their efforts were ineffectual; but as foon as he was removed by Valerian to a more honourable but less important station, they refumed the attack of Pityus; and, by the destruction of that city, obliterated the memory of their former disgrace 106.

The Goths besiege and take Trebizond, Circling round the eastern extremity of the Euxine sea, the navigation from Pityus to Trebizond is about three hundred miles 107. The course of the Goths carried them in sight of the country of Colchis, so samous by the expedition of the Argonauts; and they even attempted, though without success, to pillage a rich temple at the mouth of the river Phasis. Trebizond, celebrated in the retreat of the ten thousand as an ancient colony of Greeks 108, derived its wealth

a

P

polis, forty-four miles to the east of Pityus. The garrison of Phasis consisted in his time of only four hundred foot. See the Periplus of the Euxine.

¹⁰⁶ Zofimus, 1. i. p. 30.

¹⁰⁷ Arrian (in Periplo Maris Euxin. p. 130.) calls the distance

¹⁰⁸ Xenophon. Anabasis, 1. iv. p. 348. Edit. Hutchinson.

and splendour from the munificence of the em- CHAP. peror Hadrian, who had constructed an artificial port on a coast left destitute by nature of secure harbours 109. The city was large and populous: a double enclosure of walls feemed to defy the fury of the Goths, and the usual garrison had been strengthened by a reinforcement of ten thoufand men. But there are not any advantages capable of supplying the absence of discipline and vigilance. The numerous garrison of Trebizond. diffolved in riot and luxury, difdained to guard their impregnable fortifications. The Goths foon discovered the supine negligence of the besieged. erected a lofty pile of fascines, ascended the walls in the filence of the night, and entered the defenceless city, sword in hand. A general masfacre of the people enfued, whilst the affrighted foldiers escaped through the opposite gates of the town. The most holy temples, and the most fplendid edifices, were involved in a common destruction. The booty that fell into the hands of the Goths was immense: the wealth of the adjacent countries had been deposited in Trebizond, as in a secure place of refuge. The number of captives was incredible, as the victorious barbarians ranged without opposition through the extensive province of Pontus 110. The rich spoils of Trebizond filled a great fleet of ships that had been found in the port. The robust youth of the

To See an epiftle of Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, quoted by Mascou, v. 37.

CHAP. fea-coast were chained to the oar; and the Goths. fatisfied with the frecess of their first naval expedition, returned in triumph to their new effablishments in the kingdom of Bosphorus

The fecond expethe Goths.

The fecond expedition of the Goths was undertaken with greater powers of men and ships; but they steered a different course, and, disdaining the exhaufted provinces of Pontus, followed the western coast of the Euxine, passed before the wide mouths of the Borysthenes, the Niester, and the Danube, and increasing their fleet by the capture of a great number of fishing barks, they approached the narrow outlet through which the Euxine sea pours its waters into the Mediterranean, and divides the continents of Europe and Alia. The garrison of Chalcedon was encamped near the temple of Jupiter Urius, on a promontory that commanded the entrance of the Strait; and fo inconfiderable were the dreaded invafions of the barbarians, that this body of troops furpaffed in number the Gothic army. But it was in numbers alone that they surpassed it. They deferted with precipitation their advantageous post, and alrandoned the town of Chalcedon, most plentifully stored with arms and money, to the discretion of the conquerors. Whilst they hesitated whether they should prefer the sea or land, Europe or Alia, for the scene of their hostilities, a perfidious fugitive pointed out Nicomedia, once the capital of the kings of Bithynia, as a rich and easy conquest. He guided the march, which

They plunder the cities of Bithy-

1024

was only fixty miles from the camp of Chalce- CHAP. don ", directed the refiftless attack, and partook of the booty; for the Goths had learned sufficient policy to reward the traitor, whom they detefted. Nice, Prufa, Apæmæa, Cius, cities that had fometimes rivalled, or imitated, the splendour of Nicomedia, were involved in the fame calamity, which, in a few weeks, raged without controul through the whole province of Bithynia. Three hundred years of peace, enjoyed by the foft inhabitants of Asia, had abolished the exercise of arms, and removed the apprehension of danger. The ancient walls were suffered to moulder away. and all the revenue of the most opulent cities was referved for the construction of baths, temples, and theatres 413. We marrie a sittle to 155

When the city of Cyzicus withstood the ut- Retreat of most effort of Mithridates "4, it was distinguished the Goths. by wife laws, a naval power of two hundred gallies, and three arlenals; of arms, of military engines, and of corn "15. It was still the feat of wealth and luxury; but of its ancient strength, nothing remained except the fituation, in a little island of the Propontis, connected with the continent of Asia only by two bridges. From the recent fack of Prusa, the Goths advanced within eighteen miles 116 of the city, which they had de-

¹¹² Itiner. Hierofolym. p. 572. Wesseling.

¹¹³ Zofimus, 1. i. p. 32, 33.

¹¹⁴ He befieged the place with 400 gallies, 150,000 foot, and 2 numerous cavalry. See Plutarch in Lucul. Appian in Mithridat. Cicero pro Lege Manilia, c. 8.

¹¹⁵ Strabo, l. xii. p. 573.

¹¹⁶ Pocock's Description of the East, l. ii. c. 23, 24.

THE DECLINE AND FALL

CHAP. voted to destruction; but the ruin of Cyzicus was delayed by a fortunate accident. The feafon was rainy, and the lake Apolloniates, the refervoir of all the springs of Mount Olympus, rose to an uncommon height. The little river of Rhyndacus, which iffues from the lake, swelled into a broad and rapid stream, and stopped the progress of the Goths. Their retreat to the maritime city of Heraclea, where the fleet had probably been flationed, was attended by a long train of waggons, laden with the spoils of Bithynia, and was marked by the flames of Nice and Nicodemia, which they wantonly burnt "7. Some obscure hints are mentioned of a doubtful combat that secured their retreat 118. But even a complete victory would have been of little moment, as the approach of the autumnal equinox fummoned them to haften their return. To navigate the Euxine before the month of May, or after that of September, is esteemed by the modern Turks the most unquestionable instance of rashness and folly 119.

Third naval expedition of the Goths.

When we are informed that the third fleet, equipped by the Goths in the ports of Bosphorus, confifted of five hundred fail of ships 120, our ready imagination inflantly computes and multiplies the formidable armament; but, as we are affured

Verec

b

fe

L

fa

tl

tl

O

³¹⁷ Zofimus, 1. i. p. 33.

¹¹⁸ Syncellus tells an unintelligible story of Prince Odenatbus, who defeated the Goths, and who was killed by Prince Odenathus.

¹¹⁹ Voyages de Chardin, tom. i. p. 45. He failed with the Turks from Constantinople to Caffa.

¹²⁰ Syncellus (p. 382.) speaks of this expedition, as undertaken by the Heruli, a Delatopolp of the Best I but on the

by the judicious Strabo 121, that the piratical vef- CHAP. fels used by the barbarians of Pontus and the X. Lesser Scythia, were not capable of containing more than twenty-five or thirty men, we may fafely affirm, that fifteen thousand warriors, at the most, embarked in this great expedition. Impatient of the limits of the Euxine, they steered their destructive course from the Cimmerian to the Thracian Bosphorus. When they had almost gained the middle of the Straits, they were fuddenly driven back to the entrance of them; till They pass the Bosa favourable wind springing up the next day, phorusand carried them in a few hours into the placid sea, the Helleor rather lake of the Propontis. Their landing on the little island of Cyzicus, was attended with the ruin of that ancient and noble city. From thence iffuing again through the narrow paffage of the Hellespont, they pursued their winding navigation amidst the numerous islands scattered over the Archipelago, or the Ægean Sea. The affiftance of captives and deferters must have been very necessary to pilot their vessels, and to direct their various incursions, as well on the coast of Greece as on that of Asia. At length the Gothic fleet anchored in the port of Piræus, five miles distant from Athens 122, which had attempted to make some preparations for a vigorous defence. Cleodamus, one of the engineers employed by the emperor's orders to fortify the maritime cities against the Goths, had already begun to repair the ancient walls fallen to decay fince the time of

111 Strabo, 1. xi. p. 495. 122 Plin. Hift. Natur. iii. 7.

CHAP. Sylla. The efforts of his skill were ineffectual, and the barbarians became masters of the native feat of the muses and the arts. But while the conquerors abandoned themselves to the license of plunder and intemperance, their fleet, that lay with a slender guard in the harbour of Piræus. was unexpectedly attacked by the brave Dexippus, who, flying with the engineer Cleodamus from the fack of Athens, collected a hafty band of volunteers, peafants as well as foldiers, and in some measure avenged the calamities of his counthe Bolbersmod trykis tren ods qu paronigi baiw olds leovid a

Greece, and threaten Italy.

tol repe

Charles

But this exploit, whatever luftre it might fhed on the declining age of Athens, served rather to irritate than to subdue the undaunted spirit of the northern invaders. A general conflagration blazed out at the same time in every district of Greece. Thebes and Argos, Corinth and Sparta, which had formerly waged fuch memorable wars against each other, were now unable to bring an army into the field, or even to defend their ruined fortifications. The rage of war, both by land and by sea, spread from the eastern point of Sunium to the western coast of Epirus. The Goths had already advanced within fight of Italy, when the approach of fuch imminent danger awakened the indolent Gallienus from his dream of pleasure. The emperor appeared in arms;

¹²³ Hift. August. p. 181. Victor, c. 33. Orosius, vii. 42. Zofimus, l. i. p. 35. Zonaras, l. xii. 635. Syncellus, p. 382. It is not without fome attention, that we can explain and conciliate their imperfect hints. We can still discover some traces of the partiality of Dexippus, in the relation of his own and his countrymen's exploits. and

visions and

and his presence seems to have checked the ar- CHAP. dour, and to have divided the strength, of the enemy. Naulobatus, a chief of the Heruli, accepted an honourable capitulation, entered with retreat. a large body of his countrymen into the fervice of Rome, and was invested with the ornaments of the confular dignity, which had never before been profaned by the hands of a barbarian 124. Great numbers of the Goths, difgusted with the perils and hardships of a tedious voyage, broke into Mæsia, with a design of forcing their way over the Danube to their fettlements in the Ukraine. The wild attempt would have proved inevitable destruction, if the discord of the Roman generals had not opened to the barbarians the means of an escape 125. The small remainder of this deftroying hoft returned on board their veffels; and measuring back their way through the Hellespont and the Bosphorus, ravaged in their paffage the shores of Troy, whose fame, immortalized by Homer, will probably furvive the memory of the Gothic conquests. As soon as they found themselves in safety within the bason of the Euxine, they landed at Anchialus in Thrace, near the foot of Mount Hæmus; and, after all their toils, indulged themselves in the use of those pleasant and salutary hot baths. What remained

Ruin of lamer sals

of Ephe

¹²⁴ Syncellus, p. 382. This body of Heruli was for a long time faithful and famous.

¹²⁵ Claudius, who commanded on the Danube, thought with propriety and acted with spirit. His colleague was jealous of his fame. Hift, August. p. 181. iters, confinally represent as Oct

432

CHAP. of the voyage was a short and easy navigation 126. Such was the various fate of this third and greatest of their naval enterprises. It may seem difficult to conceive, how the original body of fifteen thousand warriors could fustain the losses and divisions of so bold an adventure. But as their numbers were gradually wasted by the sword, by shipwrecks, and by the influence of a warm climate, they were pepetually renewed by troops of banditti and deferters, who flocked to the flandard of plunder, and by a crowd of fugitive flaves, often of German or Sarmatian extraction, who eagerly seized the glorious opportunity of freedom and revenge. In these expeditions, the Gothio nation claimed a superior share of honour and danger; but the tribes that fought under the Gothie banners, are sometimes distinguished and fometimes confounded in the imperfect histories of that age; and as the barbarian fleets feemed to iffue from the mouth of the Tanais, the vague but familiar appellation of Scythians was frequently bestowed on the mixt multitude 127.

Ruin of the temple of Ephefus.

Carteria.

en Lour

In the general calamities of mankind, the death of an individual, however exalted, the ruin of an edifice, however famous, are paffed over with careless inattention. Yet we cannot forget that the temple of Diana at Ephelus, after having risen with increasing splendour from seven re-

peated

pe

G

G

er

W

m

the

fee

ter

fel

the

co

Cy

va

ter

tw

of

otl

tha

TH

mi

of

qu

rai

tio

the

12 12 Tac

very

vol.

¹²⁶ Jornandes, c. 20.

¹²⁷ Zolimus and the Greeks (as the author of the Philopatris) give the name of Scythians to those whom Jornandes, and the Latin writers, constantly represent as Goths.

peated misfortunes 128, was finally burnt by the CHAP. Goths in their third naval invasion. The arts of Greece, and the wealth of Asia, had conspired to erect that facred and magnificent structure. It was supported by an hundred and twenty-seven marble columns of the Ionic order. They were the gifts of devout monarchs, and each was fixty feet high. The altar was adorned with the mafterly sculptures of Praxiteles, who had, perhaps, felected from the favourite legends of the place the birth of the divine children of Latona, the concealment of Apollo after the flaughter of the Cyclops, and the clemency of Bacchus to the vanquished Amazons 129. Yet the length of the temple of Ephefus was only four hundred and twenty-five feet, about two-thirds of the measure of the church of St. Peter's at Rome 130. In the other dimensions, it was still more inferior to that fublime production of modern architecture. The spreading arms of a Christian cross require a much greater breadth than the oblong temples of the Pagans; and the boldest artists of antiquity would have been startled at the proposal of raifing in the air a dome of the fize and proportions of the pantheon. The temple of Diana was, however, admired as one of the wonders of the world. Successive empires, the Persian, the

¹²⁸ Hift. August. p. 178. Jornandes, c. 20.

Tacit. Annal. iii. 61. Plin. Hist. Nat. xxxvi. 14.

The length of St. Peter's is 840 Roman palms; each palm is very little short of nine English inches. See Greaves's Miscellanies, vol. i. p. 233; On the Roman foot.

CHAP. Macedonian, and the Roman, had revered its fanctity, and enriched its splendour *31. But the rude savages of the Baltic were destitute of a taste for the elegant arts, and they despised the ideal terrors of a foreign superstition 132.

Conduct of the Goths at Athens.

Another circumstance is related of these invafions, which might deserve our notice, were it not justly to be suspected as the fanciful conceit of a recent fophist. We are told, that in the fack of Athens the Goths had collected all the libraries, and were on the point of fetting fire to this funeral pile of Grecian learning, had not one of their chiefs, of more refined policy than his brethren, dissuaded them from the design; by the profound observation, that as long as the Greeks were addicted to the study of books, they would never apply themselves to the exercife of arms 193. The fagacious counfellor (should the truth of the fact be admitted) reasoned like an ignorant barbarian. In the most polite and powerful nations, genius of every kind has difplayed itself about the same period; and the age of science has generally been the age of military virtue and fuccess.

Hook M

The policy, however, of the Romans induced them to abridge the extent of the fanctuary or afylum, which by successive privileges had spread itself two stadia round the temple. Strabo, l. xiv. p. 641. Tacit. Annal. iii. 60, &c.

¹³² They offered no facrifices to the Grecian gods. See Epistol. Gregor. Thaumat.

fuited to the taste of Montaigne. He makes use of it in his agreeable Essay on Pedantry, 1. i. c. 24.

IV. The new fovereigns of Persia, Artaxerxes CHAP. and his fon Sapor, had triumphed (as we have already feen) over the house of Arsaces. Of the Conquest of Armemany princes of that ancient race, Chofroes, nia by the king of Armenia, had alone preserved both his life and his independence. He defended himfelf by the natural strength of his country; by the perpetual refort of fugitives and malecontents; by the alliance of the Romans, and, above all, by his own courage. Invincible in arms, during a thirty years war, he was at length affaffinated by the emissaries of Sapor king of Persia. The patriotic fatraps of Armenia, who afferted the freedom and dignity of the crown, implored the protection of Rome in favour of Tiridates the lawful heir. But the fon of Chofroes was an infant, the allies were at a distance, and the Perfian monarch advanced towards the frontier at the head of an irrefistible force. Young Tiridates, the future hope of his country, was faved by the fidelity of a fervant, and Armenia continued above twenty-seven years a reluctant province of the great monarchy of Persia 134. Elated with this easy conquest, and presuming on the distresses or the degeneracy of the Romans, Sapor obliged the strong garrisons of Carrhæ and Nisibis to furrender, and spread devastation and terror on either fide of the Euphrates.

134 Moses Chorenensis, l. ii. c. 71. 73, 74. Zonaras, l. xij. p. 628. The authentic relation of the Armenian historian serves to rectify the confused account of the Greek. The latter talks of the children of Tiridates, who at that time was himself an infant.

Valerian marches into the Eaft.

The loss of an important frontier, the ruin of a faithful and natural ally, and the rapid fuccess of Sapor's ambition, affected Rome with a deep fense of the insult as well as of the danger. Valerian flattered himself, that the vigilance of his lieutenants would fufficiently provide for the fafety of the Rhine and of the Danube; but he refolved, notwithstanding his advanced age, to march in person to the defence of the Euphrates. During his progress through Asia Minor, the naval enterprises of the Goths were suspended, and the afflicted province enjoyed a transient and fallacious calm. He passed the Euphrates, encountered the Persian monarch near the walls of Edessa, was vanquished and taken prisoner by The particulars of this great event are Sapor. darkly and imperfectly represented; yet, by the glimmering light which is afforded us, we may discover a long feries of imprudence, of error, and of deferved misfortunes on the fide of the Roman emperor. He reposed an implicit confidence in Macrianus, his Prætorian præfect 135. That worthless minister rendered his master formidable only to the oppressed subjects, and contemptible to the enemies of Rome 136. By his weak or wicked counsels, the Imperial army was betrayed into a fituation, where valour and military skill were equally unavailing 137. The vigorous attempt of the Romans to cut their way through the Persian host was repulsed with great

Is defeated and taken prifoner by Sapor king of Persia.
A. D. 260.

Christians, they charged him with being a magician.

flaugh-

fla

ca

til

ha

m

ca

de

fu

fic

co

va

m

en

to

to

as

m

do

u

hi

ei

ai

e

P

n

çi

¹³⁶ Zosimus, l. i. p. 33. 137 Hift. August. p. 174.

flaughter 138; and Sapor, who encompassed the CHAP. camp with fuperior numbers, pariently waited till the increasing rage of famine and pestilence had enfured his victory. The licentious murmurs of the legions foon accused Valerian as the cause of their calamities; their seditious clamours demanded an instant capitulation. An immense, fum of gold was offered to purchase the permission of a difgraceful retreat. But the Persian, conscious of his superiority, refused the money with disdain; and detaining the deputies, advanced in order of battle to the foot of the Roman rampart, and infifted on a personal conference with the emperor. Valerian was reduced to the necessity of intrusting his life and dignity to the faith of an enemy. The interview ended as it was natural to expect. The emperor was made a prisoner, and his astonished troops laid down their arms 139. In fuch a moment of triumph, the pride and policy of Sapor prompted him to fill the vacant throne with a fucceffor entirely dependent on his pleasure. Cyriades, an obscure fugitive of Antioch, stained with every vice, was chosen to dishonour the Roman purple; and the will of the Persian victor could not fail of being ratified by the acclamations, however reluctant, of the captive army 140.

¹³⁸ Victor. in Cæfar. Eutropius, ix. 7.

Zosimus, l. i. p. 33. Zonaras, l. xii. p. 630. Peter Patricius in the Excerpta Legat. p. 29.

¹⁴⁰ Hift. August. p. 185. The reign of Cyriades appears in that collection prior to the death of Valerian; but I have preferred a probable series of events to the doubtful chronology of a most inscurate writer.

CHAP. Sapor overruns Syria, Cilicia, and Cappado-

The imperial flave was eager to fecure the favour of his master, by an act of treason to his native country. He conducted Sapor over the Euphrates, and by the way of Chalcis to the metropolis of the East. So rapid were the motions of the Persian cavalry, that, if we may credit a very judicious historian 141, the city of Antioch was furprised when the idle multitude was fondly gazing on the amusements of the theatre. The splendid buildings of Antioch, private as well as public, were either pillaged or destroyed; and the numerous inhabitants were put to the fword, or led away into captivity 142. The tide of devastation was stopped for a moment by the resolution of the high priest of Emesa: Arrayed in his facerdotal robes, he appeared at the head of a great body of fanatic peafants, armed only with flings, and defended his god and his property from the facrilegious hands of the followers of Zoroaster 143. But the ruin of Tarfus, and of many other cities, furnishes a melancholy proof that, except in this fingular instance, the conquest of Syria and Cilicia scarcely interrupted the progress of the Persian arms. The advantages of the narrow passes of mount Taurus were abandoned, in which an invader, whose principal force confifted in his cavalry, would have been engaged in a very unequal combat;

¹⁴¹ The fack of Antioch, anticipated by some historians, is affigned, by the decisive testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus, to the reign of Gallienus, xxiii. 5.

¹⁴² Zofimus, 1. i. p. 35.

A TO THE RESIDENCE 143 John Malala, tom. i. p. 391. He corrupts this probable event by fome fabulous circumstances.

and Sapor was permitted to form the fie geof CHAP. Cæsarea, the capital of Cappadocia; a city, though of the fecond rank, which was supposed to contain four hundred thousand inhabitants. Demosthenes commanded in the place, not fo much by the commission of the emperor, as in the voluntary defence of his country. long time he deferred its fate; and, when at last Cæfarea was betrayed by the perfidy of a physician, he cut his way through the Persians, who had been ordered to exert their utmost diligence to take him alive. This heroic chief escaped the power of a foe, who might either have honoured or punished his obstinate valour; but many thousands of his fellow-citizens were involved in a general maffacre, and Sapor is accused of treating his prisoners with wanton and unrelenting cruelty 144. Much should undoubtedly be allowed for national animofity, much for humbled pride and impotent revenge; yet, upon the whole, it is certain, that the fame prince, who, in Armenia, had displayed the mild aspect of a legislator, shewed himself to the Romans under the stern features of a conqueror. He despaired of making any permanent establishment in the empire, and fought only to leave behind him a wasted desert, whilst he transported into Persia the people and the treasures of the provinces 145.

¹⁴⁴ Zonaras, l. xii. p. 630. Deep vallies were filled up with the flain. Crowds of prisoners were driven to water like beasts, and many perished for want of food.

¹⁴⁵ Zosimus, l. i. p. 25. asserts, that Sapor, had he not preferred spoil to conquest, might have remained master of Asia.

Boldness thus against Sapor,

CHAP. At the time when the East trembled at the name of Sapor, he received a present not unworand success thy of the greatest kings; a long train of camels of Odena- laden with the most rare and valuable merchandifes. The rich offering was accompanied with an epistle, respectful but not servile, from Odenathus, one of the noblest and most opulent fenators of Palmyra. "Who is this Odenathus " (said the haughty Victor, and he commanded " that the presents should be cast into the Eu-" phrates), that he thus infolently prefumes to " write to his lord? If he entertains a hope of " mitigating his punishment, let him fall pro-" strate before the foot of our throne with his " hands bound behind his back. Should he " hesitate, swift destruction shall be poured on " his head, on his whole race, and on his coun-" try 146." The desperate extremity to which the Palmyrenian was reduced, called into action all the latent powers of his foul. He met Sapor; but he met him in arms. Infusing his own spirit into a little army collected from the villages of Syria 147, and the tents of the defert 148, he hovered round the Persian host, harassed their retreat, carried off part of the treasure, and, what was dearer than any treasure, several of the

246 Peter Patricius in Excerpt. Leg. p. 29.

¹⁴⁷ Syrorum agrestium manû. Sextus Rufus, c. 23. Rufus, Victor, the Augustan History (p. 192.), and several inscriptions agree in making Odenathus a citizen of Palmyra.

¹⁴⁸ He poffessed so powerful an interest among the wandering tribes, that Procopius (Bell. Persic. I. ii. c. 5.) and John Malala (tom. i. p. 391.) ftyle him prince of the Saracens.

women of the Great King; who was at last CHAP. obliged to repass the Euphrates with some marks of haste and confusion 149. By this exploit, Odenathus laid the foundations of his future fame and fortunes. The majesty of Rome, oppressed by a Persian, was protected by a Syrian or Arab of Palmyra.

The voice of history, which is often little Treatment more than the organ of hatred or flattery, re- an. of Valeriproaches Sapor with a proud abuse of the rights of conquest. We are told that Valerian, in chains, but invested with the Imperial purple, was exposed to the multitude, a constant spectacle of fallen greatness; and that whenever the Perfian monarch mounted on horfeback, he placed his foot on the neck of a Roman emperor. Notwithstanding all the remonstrances of his allies, who repeatedly advised him to remember the vicifitude of fortune, to dread the returning power of Rome, and to make his illustrious captive the pledge of peace, not the object of infult, Sapor still remained inslexible. When Valerian funk under the weight of shame and grief, his Ikin, stuffed with straw, and formed into the likeness of a human figure, was preserved for ages in the most celebrated temple of Persia; a more real monument of triumph, than the fancied trophies of brass and marble so often erected by Roman vanity 150. The tale is moral and pathetic,

149 Peter Patricius, p. 25.

¹⁵⁰ The Pagan writers lament, the Christian insult, the misfortunes of Valerian. Their various testimonies are accurately collected

CHAP, pathetic, but the truth of it may very fairly be called in question. The letters still extant from the princes of the East to Sapor, are manifest forgeries 151; nor is it natural to suppose that a jealous monarch should, even in the person of a rival, thus publicly degrade the majesty of kings. Whatever treatment the unfortunate Valerian might experience in Persia, it is at least certain, that the only emperor of Rome who had ever fallen into the hands of the enemy, languished away his life in hopeless captivity.

Character and administration of Gallienus.

The emperor Gallienus, who had long fupported with impatience the censorial severity of his father and colleague, received the intelligence of his misfortunes with fecret pleafure and avowed indifference. " I knew that my father was a " mortal," faid he, " and fince he has acted as " becomes a brave man, I am fatisfied." Whilft Rome lamented the fate of her fovereign, the favage coldness of his fon was extolled by the servile courtiers, as the perfect firmness of a hero and a stoic 152. It is difficult to paint the light, the various, the inconstant character of Gallienus, which he displayed without constraint, as foon as he became fole possessor of the empire, In every art that he attempted, his lively genius

by Tillemont, tom. iii. p. 739, &c. So little has been preserved of eastern history before Mahomet, that the modern Persians are totally ignorant of the victory of Sapor, an event so glorious to their nation. See Bibliotheque Orientale,

151 One of these epistles is from Artavasdes, king of Armenia: fince Armenia was then a province in Perfia, the king, the kingdom, and the epiftle, must be fictitious.

152 See his life in the Augustan History.

enabled

enabled him to succeed; and as his genius was CHAP. destitute of judgment, he attempted every art, except the important ones of war and government. He was a master of several curious but useless sciences, a ready orator, and elegant poet 153, a skilful gardener, an excellent cook, and most contemptible prince. When the great emergencies of the state required his presence and attention, he was engaged in conversation with the philosopher Plotinus 154, wasting his time in trifling or licentious pleasures, preparing his initiation to the Grecian mysteries, or foliciting a place in the Areopagus of Athens. His profuse magnificence insulted the general poverty; the folemn ridicule of his triumphs impressed a deeper sense of the public disgrace 153. The repeated

There is still extant a very pretty Epithalamium, composed by Gallienus for the nuptials of his nephews.

Ite ait, O Juvenes, pariter sudate medullis Omnibus, inter vos; non murmura vestra columbæ, Brachia non Hederæ, non vincant oscula Conchæ.

pania, to try the experiment of realizing Plato's Republic. See the Life of Plotinus, by Porphyry, in Fabricius's Biblioth. Græc. 1. iv.

antiquarians by its legend and reverse; the former Galliena Augusta, the latter Ubique Pax. M. Spanheim supposes that the coin was struck by some of the enemies of Gallienus, and was designed as a severe satire on that effeminate prince. But as the use of irony may seem unworthy of the gravity of the Roman mint, M. de Vallemont has deduced from a passage of Trebellius Pollio (Hist. August. p. 198.) an ingenious and natural solution. Galliena was first cousin to the emperor. By delivering Africa from the usurper Celsus, she deferved the title of Augusta. On a medal in the French king's collection, we read a similar inscription of Faustina Augusta round the head of Marcus Aurelius. With regard to the Ubique Pax, it is easily explained by the vanity of Gallienus, who seized, perhaps,

CHAP. repeated intelligence of invasions, defeats, and rebellions, he received with a careless smile; and fingling out, with affected contempt, fome particular production of the lost province, he carelessly asked, whether Rome must be ruined, unless it was supplied with linen from Egypt, and Arras cloth from Gaul? There were, however, a few short moments in the life of Gallienus, when, exasperated by some recent injury, he fuddenly appeared the intrepid foldier, and the cruel tyrant; till satiated with blood, or satigued by resistance, he insensibly sunk into the natural mildness and indolence of his character 156.

The thirty tyrants.

At a time when the reins of government were held with fo loofe a hand, it is not furprifing, that a crowd of usurpers should start up in every province of the empire against the son of Valerian. It was probably some ingenious fancy, of comparing the thirty tyrants of Rome with the thirty tyrants of Athens, that induced the writers of the Augustan history to select that celebrated number, which has been gradually received into a popular appellation 157. But in every light the parallel is idle and defective. What resemblance can we discover between a council

the occasion of some momentary calm. See Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres, Janvier 1700. p. 21-34.

156 This fingular character has, I believe, been fairly transmitted to us. The reign of his immediate successor was short and busy; and the historians who wrote before the elevation of the family of Constantine, could not have the most remote interest to misrepresent the character of Gallienus.

157 Pollio expresses the most minute anxiety to complete the

showing the court forming to giver his

of thirty persons, the united oppressors of a fin- CHAP. gle city, and an uncertain lift of independent rivals, who rose and fell in irregular succession through the extent of a vast empire? Nor can the number of thirty be completed, unless we include in the account the women and children who were honoured with the Imperial title. The reign of Gallienus, distracted as it was, produced only nineteen pretenders to the throne; Cyriades, Their real Macrianus, Balista, Odenathus, and Zenobia in was no the east; in Gaul, and the western provinces, more than nineteen. Posthumus, Lollianus, Victorinus and his mother Victoria, Marius, and Tetricus. In Illyricum and the confines of the Danube, Ingenuus, Regillianus, and Aureolus; in Pontus 158, Saturninus; in Isauria, Trebellianus; Piso in Thesfaly; Valens in Achaia; Æmilianus in Egypt; and Celfus in Africa. To illustrate the obscure monuments of the life and death of each individual, would prove a laborious task, alike barren of instruction and of amusement. We may content ourselves with investigating some general characters, that most strongly mark the condition of the times, and the manners of the men, their pretensions, their motives, their fate, and the destructive consequences of their usurpation 159;

It is fufficiently known, that the odious appel- Character lation of Tyrant was often employed by the an- and merit of the tycients to express the illegal seizure of supreme rants.

¹⁵⁸ The place of his reign is fomewhat doubtful; but there was a tyrant in Pontus, and we are acquainted with the feat of all the

¹⁵⁹ Tillemont, tom. iii. p. 1163, reckons them somewhat differently.

CHAP. power, without any reference to the abuse of it. Several of the pretenders, who raised the standard of rebellion against the emperor Gallienus, were shining models of virtue, and almost all possessed a considerable share of vigour and ability. Their merit had recommended them to the favour of Valerian, and gradually promoted them to the most important commands of the empire. The generals, who assumed the title of Augustus, were either respected by their troops for their able conduct and fevere discipline, or admired for valour and fuccess in war, or beloved for frankness and generosity. The field of victory was often the scene of their election; and even the armourer Marius, the most contemptible of all the candidates for the purple, was distinguished however by intrepid courage, matchless strength, and blunt honesty 160. His mean and recent trade cast indeed an air of ridicule on his elevation; but his birth could not be more obscure than was that of the greater part of his rivals, who were born of peafants, and inlifted in the army as private foldiers. In times of confusion, every active genius finds the place affigned him by Nature: in a general state of war, military merit is the road to glory and to greatness. Of the nineteen tyrants, Tetricus only was a fenator; Pifo alone was a noble. The blood of Numa, through twenty-eight fucceffive generations, ran in the veins of Calphur-

Their obfcure birth.

> 160 See the speech of Marius, in the Augustan History, p. 197. The accidental identity of names was the only circumstance that could tempt Pollio to imitate Salluft.

nius

nius Piso 161, who, by female alliances, claimed CHAP. a right of exhibiting, in his house, the images of -Crassus and of the great Pompey 162. His ancestors had been repeatedly dignified with all the honours which the commonwealth could bestow: and of all the ancient families of Rome, the Calphurnian alone had furvived the tyranny of the Cæfars. The personal qualities of Piso added new lustre to his race. The usurper Valens, by whose order he was killed, confessed, with deep remorse, that even an enemy ought to have respected the fanctity of Pifo; and although he died in arms against Gallienus, the senate, with the emperor's generous permission, decreed the triumphal ornaments to the memory of fo virtuous a rebel 163.

The lieutenants of Valerian were grateful to The causes the father, whom they efteemed. They dif- rebellion. dained to ferve the luxurious indolence of his unworthy fon. The throne of the Roman world was unsupported by any principle of loyalty; and treason, against such a prince, might easily be confidered as patriotism to the state. Yet if we examine with candour the conduct of these

161 Vos, Q Pompilius fanguis! is Horace's address to the Pisos. See Art. Poet. v. 292, with Dacier's and Sanadon's notes. .

162 Tacit. Annal. xv. 48. Hift. i. 15. In the former of thefe passages we may venture to change paterna into materna. In every generation from Augustus to Alexander Severus, one or more Pisos appear as confuls. A Pifo was deemed worthy of the throne by Augustus (Tacit. Annal. i. 13.). A second headed a formidable conspiracy against Nero; and a third was adopted, and declared Cafar by Galba.

163 Hist. August. p. 195. The senate, in a moment of enthuhasm, seems to have presumed on the approbation of Gallienus.

CHAP usurpers, it will appear, that they were much oftener driven into rebellion by their fears, than urged to it by their ambition. They dreaded the cruel suspicions of Gallienus; they equally dreaded the capricious violence of their troops. If the dangerous favour of the army had imprudently declared them deserving of the purple, they were marked for fure destruction; and even prudence would counsel them, to secure a short enjoyment of empire, and rather to try the fortune of war, than to expect the hand of an executioner. When the clamour of the foldiers invested the reluctant victims with the ensigns of fovereign authority, they fometimes mourned in fecret their approaching fate. "You have loft," faid Saturninus, on the day of his elevation, " you have lost a useful commander, and you have made a very wretched emperor 164."

Their violent deaths.

The apprehensions of Saturninus were justified by the repeated experience of revolutions. Of the nineteen tyrants who started up under the reign of Gallienus, there was not one who enjoyed a life of peace, or a natural death. As foon as they were invested with the bloody purple, they inspired their adherents with the same fears and ambition which had occasioned their own revolt. Encompassed with domestic confpiracy, military fedition, and civil war, they trembled on the edge of precipices, in which, after a longer or shorter term of anxiety, they were inevitably loft. These precarious monarchs

164 Hift. August. p. 196.

The Stellas Till O'L

uturpers,

received,

re

I

fi

received, however, fuch honours, as the flattery CHAP. of their respective armies and provinces could bestow; but their claim, founded on rebellion. could never obtain the function of law or history. Italy, Rome, and the fenate, constantly adhered to the cause of Gallienus, and he alone was confidered as the fovereign of the empire. That prince condescended indeed to acknowledge the victorious arms of Odenathus, who deserved the honourable distinction, by the respectful conduct which he always maintained towards the fon of Valerian. With the general applause of the Romans, and the confent of Gallienus, the senate conferred the title of Augustus on the brave Palmyrenian; and feemed to intrust him with the government of the East, which he already possessed, in so independent a manner, that, like a private succession, he bequeathed it to his illustrious widow Zenobia 165.

The rapid and perpetual transitions from the Fatal confequences cottage to the throne, and from the throne to of these uthe grave, might have amused an indifferent philosopher; were it possible for a philosopher to remain indifferent amidst the general calamities of human kind. The election of these precarious emperors, their power and their death, were equally destructive to their subjects and adherents. The price of their fatal elevation was instantly discharged to the troops, by an immense donative, drawn from the bowels of the exhausted

165 The affociation of the brave Palmyrenian was the most popular act of the whole reign of Gallienus. Hift. August. p. 180,

Eleal conesonoupol,

thefu ur

... aoin's quite

CHAP. people. However virtuous was their character however pure their intentions, they found themfelves reduced to the hard necessity of supporting their usurpation by frequent acts of rapine and cruelty. When they fell, they involved armies and provinces in their fall. There is still extant a most savage mandate from Gallienus to one of his ministers, after the suppression of Ingenuus, who had afformed the purple in Illyricum. "It " is not enough," fays that fost but inhuman prince, " that you exterminate fuch as have ap-" peared in arms: the chance of battle might " have served me as effectually. The male sex of every age must be extirpated; provided that, in the execution of the children and old " men, you can contrive means to fave our reputation. Let every one die who has dropt an expression, who has entertained a thought " against me, against me, the fon of Valerian, the father and brother of fo many princes 166. " Remember that Ingenuus was made emperor: " tear, kill, hew in pieces. I write to you with er my own hand, and would inspire you with " my own feelings 167." Whilft the public forces of the state were dissipated in private quarrels,

> 166 Gallienus had given the titles of Cæfar and Augustus to his fon Saloninus, flain at Cologn by the usurper Posthumus. A second fon of Gallienus succeeded to the name and rank of his elder brother. Valerian, the brother of Gallienus, was also affociated to the empire: several other brothers, fisters, nephews, and nieces of the emperor, formed a very numerous royal family. See Tillemont, tom. iii. and M. de Brequigny in the Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xxxii. p. 262. mistrigated exert oil to someroid ed

167 Hift. August. p. 188. Alaedle O la region ofoliw and to d

the defenceless provinces lay exposed to every CHAP. invader. The bravest usurpers were compelled, by the perplexity of their fituation, to conclude ignominious treaties with the common enemy, to purchase with oppressive tributes the neutrality or fervices of the barbarians, and to introduce hostile and independent nations into the heart of the Roman monarchy 168 1213 to available on

Such were the barbarians, and fuch the tyrants, who, under the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus, dismembered the provinces, and reduced the empire to the lowest pitch of disgrace and ruin, from whence it feemed impossible that it should ever emerge. As far as the barrenness of materials would permit; we have attempted to trace, with order and perspicuity; the general events of that calamitous period. There still temain some particular facts; I. The diforders of Sicily; II. The tumults of Alexandria; and, III. The rebellion of the Isaurians, which may serve to reflect a firong light on the horrid picture.

I. Whenever numerous troops of banditti, Diforders multiplied by fuccess and impunity, publicly defy, instead of eluding the justice of their country, we may fafely infer, that the excellive weakness of the government is felt and abused by the lowest ranks of the community. The lituation of Sicily preserved it from the barbarians; nor could the difarmed province have supported an usurper. The fufferings of that

of Sicily.

¹⁶⁸ Regillianus had fome bands of Roxolani in his service. Posthumus a body of Franks. It was perhaps in the character of auxiliaries that the latter introduced themselves into Spain.

CHAP.

once flourishing and still fertile island, were inflicted by baser hands. A licentious crowd of slaves and peasants reigned for a while over the plundered country, and renewed the memory of the servile wars of more ancient times 169. Devastations, of which the husbandman was either the victim or the accomplice, must have ruined the agriculture of Sicily; and as the principal estates were the property of the opulent senators of Rome, who often enclosed within a farm the territory of an old republic, it is not improbable, that this private injury might affect the capital more deeply, than all the conquests of the Goths or the Persians.

Tumults of Alexandria.

Inforders

of Sicily.

II. The foundation of Alexandria was a noble design, at once conceived and executed by the son of Philip. The beautiful and regular form of that great city, second only to Rome itself, comprehended a circumference of sisteen miles 170; it was peopled by three hundred thousand free inhabitants, besides at least an equal number of slaves 171. The lucrative trade of Arabia and India slowed through the port of Alexandria to the capital and provinces of the empire. Idleness was unknown. Some were employed in blowing of glass, others in weaving of linen, others again manufacturing the papyrus. Either sex, and every age, was engaged in the pursuits of industry, nor did even the blind or the lame want

Diodor. Sicul. I. xxxiv.

²⁷⁰ Plin. Hift. Natur. v. 10. Dand and had engalle

Diodor. Sicul. 1. xvii. p. 590. Edit. Wesseling.

occupations fuited to their condition 172. But the CHAP. people of Alexandria, a various mixture of nations, united the vanity and inconstancy of the Greeks, with the superstition and obstinacy of the Egyptians. The most trifling occasion, a tranfient scarcity of flesh or lentils, the neglect of an accustomed salutation, a mistake of precedency in the public baths, or even a religious dispute 173, were at any time sufficient to kindle a sedition among that vast multitude, whose resentments were furious and implacable 174. After the captivity of Valerian and the infolence of his fon had relaxed the authority of the laws, the Alexandrians abandoned themselves to the ungoverned rage of their passions, and their unhappy country was the theatre of a civil war, which continued (with a few short and suspicious truces) above twelve years 175. All intercourse was cut off between the feveral quarters of the afflicted city. every street was polluted with blood, every building of strength converted into a citadel; nor did the tumults subside, till a considerable part of Alexandria was irretrievably ruined. The fpacious and magnificent district of Bruchion, with its palaces and musæum, the residence of the

DEMES

¹⁷² See a very curious letter of Hadrian, in the Augustan History, p. 245.

¹⁷³ Such as the facrilegious murder of a divine cat. See Diodor, Sicul. 1, i.

¹⁷⁴ Hift. August. p. 195. This long and terrible sedition was first occasioned by a dispute between a soldier and a townsman about a pair of shoes.

¹⁷⁵ Dionysius apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. vol. vii. p. 21. Ammian, xxii. 16.

CHAP. kings and philosophers of Egypt, is described above a century afterwards, as already reduced to its present state of dreary solitude 176.

Rebellion of the Ifaurians.

III. The obscure rebellion of Trebellianus who assumed the purple in Isauria, a petty province of Asia Minor, was attended with strange and memorable confequences. The pageant of royalty was foon destroyed by an officer of Gallienus; but his followers; despairing of mercy; refolved to shake off their allegiance, not only to the emperor, but to the empire, and fuddenly returned to the favage manners, from which they had never perfectly been reclaimed. Their craggy rocks, a branch of the wide-extended Taurus, protected their inaccessible retreat. The tillage of some fertile vallies 177 supplied them with necessaries, and a habit of rapine with the luxuries of life. In the heart of the Roman monarchy, the Isaurians long continued a nation of wild barbarians. Succeeding princes, unable to reduce them to obedience either by arms or policy, were compelled to acknowledge their weakness, by furrounding the hostile and independent spot, with a strong chain of fortifications 178, which often proved insufficient to restrain the incursions of these domestic foes. The Ifaurians, gradually extending their territory to the fea-coaft, fubdued the western and mountainous part of Cilicia, formerly the nest of those daring

¹⁷⁵ Scaliger. Animadver. ad Euseb. Chron. p. 258. Three differtations of M. Bonamy, in the Mem. de l'Academie, tom. ix.

¹⁷⁷ Strabo, 1. xii. p. 569.

¹⁷⁸ Hift. August, p. 197-

pirates, against whom the republic had once been E H A P. obliged to exert its utmost force, under the conduct of the great Pompey 179.

Our habits of thinking fo fondly connect the Famine order of the universe with the fate of man, that and pestithis gloomy period of history has been decorated with inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors, preternatural darkness, and a crowd of prodigies fictitious or exaggerated 180. But a long and general famine was a calamity of a more ferious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must however have contributed to the furious plague, which, from the year two hundred and fifty, to the year two hundred and fixty-five, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family, of the Roman empire. During fome time five thousand persons died daily in Rome; and many towns, that had escaped the hands of the barbarians, were entirely depopulated 181.

We have the knowledge of a very curious cir- Diminucumstance, of some use perhaps in the melan- tion of the

human fpecies.

¹⁷⁹ See Cellarius, Georg. Antiq. tom. ii. p. 137. upon the limits of Isauria.

¹⁸⁰ Hist. August. p. 177.

181 Hist. August. p. 177. Zosimus, l. i. p. 24. Zonaras, l. xii.
p. 623. Euseb. Chronicon. Victor in Epitom. Victor in Cæsar. Eutropius, ix. 5. Orofius, vii. 21.

CHAP. choly calculation of human calamities. An exact register was kept at Alexandria, of all the citizens entitled to receive the distribution of corn. It was found, that the ancient number of SHEED -itten has those comprised between the ages of forty and · levee. feventy, had been equal to the whole fum of claimants, from fourteen to fourfcore years of age, who remained alive after the reign of Gallienus 112. Applying this authentic fact to the most correct tables of mortality, it evidently proves, that above half the people of Alexandria had perished; and could we venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might

human species 183

Standard Walle State

182 Euseb. Hist. Eccles. vii. 21. The fact is taken from the Letters of Dionysius, who, in the time of those troubles, was bishop of Alexandria.

the characteristic the fun

TO THE STATE OF TH

Artiful lo

rei q flygy A. ett.

fuspect, that war, pestilence, and famine, had consumed, in a few years, the moiety of the

tween fourteen and eighty; 5365 between forty and seventy. See Buffon, Histoire Naturelle, tom. ii. p. 590.

Record and many towns, that has gleaped the

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

198 See all lines. Google Leavy, when he purificult groups the Henrich



countre stay of storie wie, perhaps in the metant though of me.

